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TRANSFORMATIONS OF "PURITY" IN CHRISTIAN DISCOURSES OF DEMON COMPULSION THROUGH THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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THROUGH THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

by

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Dedication

For my husband, Andy, who now knows more about this subject matter than any oboist should ever be expected to.

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TRANSFORMATIONS OF "PURITY" IN CHRISTIAN DISCOURSES OF DEMON COMPULSION THROUGH THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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An ongoing discourse about "purity" shared by "Solomonic" magic and theology links Christian antiquity with Martin Luther. An apocryphal narrative about Solomon's demon compulsion recurs to answer questions about purity, the believer, and the practice of religion. Using Malinowski's tripartite definition of magic as *rite*, *formula*, and *condition of the performer*, supplemented with work by Mary Douglas, Jacob Neusner, and Dorothea Salzer, we trace how historical negotiations about theological definitions of "purity" emerge as tools for religious hegemonies differentiating themselves by separating licit acts of demon compulsion (exorcism) from illicit ones ("magic"). The result argues for considering Western magic in tandem with official theologies, acknowledging longitudinal continuities in theological argumentation, and situating even theological texts in the context of historical Christianities.

Chapter 1 addresses demon compulsion in Christian antiquity with reference to apologetic and polemical works by Justin Martyr, Origen, and the anonymous fourth

century *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* and the *Testament of Solomon*. Here the initial *condition of the performer* is purity as absence-of-idolatry.

Chapter 2 examines broader Christian theological developments defining "purity" as religious authorization, the rise of "Solomonic" magic as illicit, Aquinas' theological innovations in his *De Potentia Dei* (a more stable anti-magic theology).

Chapter 3 takes up early modern humanist authors, including Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and Reuchlin, who obscured their allusion to Solomon in their published works. Their works have striking parallels with texts of "Solomonic" magic as exemplified in comparing Reuchlin's Christian Cabala, *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494), and the twelfth century grimoire, the *Liber Razielis*.

Chapter 4 compares Aquinas' and Luther' theologies with respect to "purity" as presence-of-faith showing a turn to result from Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone. Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*, arguably Luther's "missing" demonology, instrumentalizes the Jews *as demons* in an effort to solve the problem of demonstrating the guilt of the magician (*corpus delicti*).

The project thus sets into dialogue a number of neglected texts, thereby situating misconstrued theological arguments within history. Tracking the persistence of altered forms of "purity" within Christianity in this way illuminates how scholars might investigate religious beliefs and practices - even modern Protestantism.

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INTRODUCTION

The Favor of God:

Purity, Grace, and Faith, in Solomonic Demon Compulsion

And from hence you enter into Golgotha. There is here a large hall, on the place where our Lord was crucified. Round about it, on the hill itself, are railings of silver, and on the hill itself a kind of flint-stone is deserving of notice. It has a silver door at which the Cross of our Lord is displayed, all covered with ornaments of gold and jewels, with the open sky above it; there are railings much adorned with gold and silver, and here also is the charger wherein the head of St. John was carried; and here is the horn with which David and Solomon were anointed; and in this place, too, is the ring with which Solomon sealed demons, which ring is of electrum.[1]

[1] Stewart's translation cited here is from: Eucherius, Aubrey Stewart, Charles W. Wilson, and Eucherius, *The Epitome of S. Eucherius About Certain Holy Places: And the 'breviary', or Short Description of Jerusalem* (New York: AMS Press, 1971) 14. The original Latin text is provided in an appendix to Stewart's published translation. The Latin original of excerpt quoted above can be found in Stewart's apendix (p. 21) and reads: "Et inde intras in *Golgotha*. Est ibi atrium grande, ubi crucifixus est Dominus. In circuitu, in ipso monte, sunt cancelli argenti, et in ipso monte genussilicis admoratur. Habet ostium argentum, ubi fuit *crux* Domini exposita, de auro et gemmis ornata tota, cœlo desuper patente; auro et argento multum ornate cancelli; ubi est elle discus, ubi caput sancti Johannis portatum fiut; ubi est illud *cornu*, quo David unctus est et Salomon, et ille annulus ibidem, unde Salomon sigillavit daemones, et est de electro […]."

That the sixth-century Christian author of the *Jerusalem Breviary* (ca. 530 CE), a sort of early pilgrim's guide to Jerusalem, should conclude the list of holy relics he beheld at Golgotha with "the ring with which Solomon sealed demons" may come as a surprise to the modern reader.[2] However, the so-called "Ring of Solomon" belongs to an apocryphal tradition concerning an ability of the builder of the First Temple to compel demons. This narrative, though far less familiar in Christian contexts now, was known and shared for centuries by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike.[3]

Record of this tradition of Solomon's power over demons survives in a variety of sources. It appears in Flavius Josephus' late first century *Antiquities of the Jews*, the Babylonian Talmud (compiled ca. 500 CE),[4] the Quran (early seventh century),[5] and in the writings of multiple Christian theologians from Origen in the third century to Aquinas in the thirteenth. It also survives as folklore, incorporated for example into one of the tales of *One Thousand and One Nights* (compiled in Arabic and published 1704), and in archeological evidence such as seventh century Babylonian incantation bowls inscribed with references to "Solomon the magician."[6] Examples like the incantation bowls demonstrate how stories of Solomon's power over demons were taken as a model for practical application and leveraged into a practice of "Solomonic" magic. In fact, the

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[2] Indeed, Stewart seems to have been so scandalized by this as to have translated "Salomon sigillavit daemones" as "Salomon sealed his writings" in the 1890 publication by the Committee for the Palestine Exploration Fund. A footnote to the Latin text given in the appendix to the published translation claims that the manuscript reads "dermones." Stewart renders this as "sermones" in the printed Latin. Moreover, "electrum," now understood to be an alloy consisting of part gold and one part silver, was formerly believed to refer to amber.

[3] For extensive examples of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's authority over demons in folklore, see: Georg Salzberger, *Die Salomo-Sage in der Semitischen Literatur. Ein Beitrag zur Vergleichenden Sagenkunde* (Berlin, 1907).

[4] See Gittin 68a-b.1 in the Babylonian Talmud.

[5] See especially surah 34.

[6] See: Jozef Verheyden, *The Figure of Solomon in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Tradition: King, Sage and Architect* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2013) 115-117.

apocryphal tradition of Solomon's demon compulsion provided the origin myth and paradigm for a variety of technologies and texts of ritual magic ranging from an early example in the Greek Magical Papyri,[7] probably dating from the second century CE, to the *Clavicula Salomonis Regis*, an anonymous seventeenth century English grimoire.[8]

Solomonic "demonic" magic, like Christian exorcism, derives from the idea that, as creator of everything, the Abrahamic God has authority over demons, and, moreover, that he can invest mortals with his divine authority if he so wishes. The Ring of Solomon, mentioned in the opening quote from the *Jerusalem Breviary*, would have impressed early pilgrims as a physical sign of that investiture with authority, much like a scepter or a crown. According to perhaps the most developed surviving account of this early apocryphal tradition, the *Testament of Solomon* (first to third century C.E.),[9] God invested Solomon with the ring through his emissary, the archangel Michael, and with it divine authority over demons.

While not all references to the apocryphal tradition of Solomon's power over demons include mention of a ring, many of them acknowledge perhaps the central trope of this material: the idea that the favor of the divine authority represented by the ring is

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[7] "Greek Magical Papyri" (Latin *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, abbreviated *PGM*) refers collectively to a body of papyri from Graeco-Roman Egypt containing a number of magical spells, formulae, hymns and rituals dating from the second century BCE to the fifth century CE. The most complete collection of these is: Hans D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[8] Peterson notes, "The date 1641 occurs in the text and may indicate that its present form dates from then." See: Joseph H. Peterson, *The Lesser Key of Solomon: Lemegeton Clavicula Salomonis* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2001) xi, here n1.

[9] Duling identifies the *Testament* as "first to third century A.D." in the introduction to his commentary and new translation of the text in D. C. Duling, "Testament of Solomon," *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983) 934-87. Additionally, for a summary and detailed discussion of the scholarship and general scholarly consensus regarding the dating of the *Testament*, see: Dennis Duling, "The Testament of Solomon: Retrospect and Prospect" *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 1.2 (1988): 88-91.

conditional. The ability of the magician or exorcist to wield this divine authority depends upon his (or more rarely her) state of "purity," as we will demonstrate below. Thus, throughout the tradition, it is the conditional nature of the divine authority that the ring represents (and not the ring itself) which stands at the center of both magical and theological discourses concerned with "Solomonic" compulsion of demons.[10]

This theological assumption thus serves as the point of departure for the present project. For, according to both the apocryphal tradition and canonical scripture, Solomon eventually lost his favor with God, when in his later years he turned to the worship of idols as described in 1 Kings 11:1-40.[11]

Scholars have adduced many readings of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons concerning both traditions of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion (including both "magic" and exorcism) and anti-magic theology. However, what has been overlooked in the scholarship is the fact that the central narrative (of which the individual retellings may be understood as refractions) represents far more than a magical tradition of pseudoepigraphy reaching from late antiquity through the early modern era – a span of some fifteen hundred years that bridges religious schisms and confessional breaks.

To fill this lacuna, the present project contends that the tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion is thus as much about the paradigm which the apocryphal narrative of the figure of Solomon provides (including, especially, the significance of purity) as it is

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[10] Julien Véronèse observes: "In magic, the use of divine names, although widespread, is nevertheless subject to strict rules involving physical cleanliness, chastity or abstinence, fasting – in other words, corporal and spiritual purity. In magical as in religious contexts, the *virtus* of names depends fundamentally on the individual state of the operator." Julien Véronèse, "God's Names and Their Uses in the Books of Magic Attributed to King Solomon" *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 5.1 (2010): 30.

[11] See 1 Kings 11:1-40.

about the authority suggested by the pseudoepigraphic attribution of the various ritual texts and technologies to the person of Solomon. Hence it is that the narrative tradition, over this great stretch of time, is a key to understanding a larger evolution of theological thought over the Christian era.

To make this case, I will use the remaining sections of this introduction to outline my rationale for stressing the role of purity in the narrative traditions (both apocryphal and canonical) of Solomon's power over demons which figure so strongly in discussions of demon compulsion (both "magical" and "exorcistic")[12] with which the present study is concerned. This rationale has in it multiple moving parts, each of which will be discussed separately. After that, the individual chapters of the project will show how the link between purity and Solomonic demon compulsion helps to open out a set of theological and popular texts that all too often have been either dismissed as inconsequential entries in the catalogues of particular authors' *œuvres* or as cultural oddities.

What comprises these chapters will be summarized at the end of this introduction. This introduction, however, will begin not with the summary of the individual chapters, but with the justification for their existence: the case for taking up purity and Solomonic

[12] As will be discussed in our investigation of the anti-magic theology of Thomas Aquinas in chapter 2, the distinction between "magic" on the one hand, and "exorcism" on the other is one that arose out of the very discourse that this project serves to investigate. The need to describe both "magic" and "exorcism" as comparable, but distinct versions of a single phenomenon has led us to the adoption of the circumscription "demon compulsion" in the present project. The difference between these two categories, we will argue, is a theological one. Thus, because this project traces ideas of demon compulsion within Christian discourses, the ability to discuss the categories both in terms of sameness and difference is crucial. Our approach to this distinction, in turn, represents a crucial methodological difference between the present project and that of Pablo A. Torijano's *Solomon, the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2002). Torijano sees a progression in the Solomon literature of view from Hebrew King, to Hellenistic King, to exorcist, to Hermetic sage, to "Son of David," to "horseman," to "astrologer, and finally to "magician." Torijano views Solomon as an essentially Jewish figure in his project and his corpus is much broader. By contrast, the present project (as we have stated) is focused on the figure of Solomon in Christian theological discourse and the discourse-internal processes of othering that drove the changes from legitimate exorcist to black magician.

magic/anti-magic in tandem, and thus challenging present scholarship to see the centrality of such debates.

The first justification for that link rests on the narrative tradition used to speak of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion itself, and the second, on the scholarship on religion that treats this body of "magic." Thus I begin my justificatory narrative by rehearsing the significance of the term "purity," and then how it functions in the work on purity and magic of Mary Douglas and Bronislaw Malinowski, respectively. These scholars have set the ground for understanding what is at stake in linking purity and magico-religious idea of demon compulsion. Using them allows me to isolate a set of critical links between the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's authority over demons and a more specific subset of ritual acts (here: "purity" as prerequisite to ritual demon compulsion as both "magic" and exorcism). This will take us to discuss Dorothea Salzer's term, *unio magica*, in reference to the associative link between a paradigmatic narrative and the staging of the magico-religious act as participation rather than reenactment.

Resting on these reference points in scholarship, I will return, re-stage and render more complex a reading of the apocryphal narrative of King Solomon's authority over demons as it is reflected in several extant non-ritual sources. My goal is to highlight how that narrative material grounded a paradigmatic argument about the link between purity and divine authority, a narrative focusing especially on the conditional nature of Solomon's investiture with divine authority – how he came to have it and how he lost it.

This connection, in turn, amplifies the relation of ritual to the question of purity/authority, as that question is structured in both texts of ritual magic and anti-magic

theological arguments that engage with questions of the efficacy of such ritual. The discussion of the source materials in relation to how the Solomon narrative functioned as argument logic accomplishes two things. First, it reveals how a particular understanding of the circumstances of Solomon's loss of the favor of God, both in canonical and apocryphal traditions, led to the understanding of purity as an element *sine qua non* for the compulsion of demons. Second, it will show that, while the concern for purity remains a constant element within the tradition(s) of Solomonic magic (i.e. "demonic" magic or *nigromantia*), the particular understanding of "purity" reflected in the tradition(s) changes over time with major changes occurring at the points of religious (Jewish-Christian), philosophical (Scholastic/Aristotelian-Platonic/Augustinian), and confessional (Catholic-Protestant) breaks.

I conclude this justification of the conceptual framework of my discussion by outlining the significance of my findings for the study of Solomonic demon compulsion (i.e. magic/anti-magic and exorcism), including observations on the contributions of orthodox theology to the development of demonic "magic" – its theory and practice as reflected in extant manuals of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion. This discussion will presage some thoughts in the conclusion of the present project, in adducing evidence that ideas of purity which appear to be informed by Protestant theology were incorporated into sixteenth century Solomonic-type demonic magic. A particularly noteworthy example of this potentially Protestant demonic magic, was one of the most popular magical grimoires of the later, nineteenth century English occult revival and modern

occultism in general, *The Book of Abramelin the Mage*, to which we will return briefly in the conclusion of the project.

Defining Purity: Prelude to Reading Solomonic Ritual Demon Compulsion

As already indicated, this project hangs in no small part on a theological commonplace within this tradition: the link between the definition of "purity" and ideas of divine authorization that could be read into the narrative of Solomon's ability to compel demons. That idea of "purity" not only recurs overtly, in various guises over the long course of the tradition(s) of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion, but also in terminological constellations that exemplify its consequences as seen in Western theologies and religious practices. For instance, some medieval authors write not of "purity" *per se*, but rather of grace or the acts believed to lead to it. Early modern authors, as we will see, circumlocute purity as faith or even predestination. Regardless of how this idea of purity is described in these magical and anti-magical texts, however, the rituals derived from the apocryphal Solomon-narrative consistently involve the favor of God, and assume that in order to obtain God's favor (and thus become authorized to compel demons), one must be "pure."[13]

[13] See Thorndike on William of Auvergne. He writes: "This brings William to the delicate question of divine names. He censures the use of the name of God by 'magicians and astronomers' in "working their diabolical marvels (*De legibus*, cap. 27). He also notes that they employ a barbaric name and not one of the four Hebrew names of God. They forbid anyone who is not pure and clad in pure vestments to presume to touch the book in which the name is written, but they try to gain evil ends by it and so blaspheme against their Creator" in Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science During the First Thirteen Centuries of Our Era: Vol. 2* (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1923) 352. Also see Thorndike: "The magicians declare that it is impossible for a wicked or impure man to work truly by the magic art, in which they assert that the spirits are compelled against their will by pure men" (284).

My choice to adopt the term "purity" in my discussion to refer to this requisite state of the ritual specialist is primarily informed by two concerns. First, "purity" is the word used in the oldest extant Solomonic ritual texts – those included among the Greek Magical Papyri.[14] These texts are the procrustean bed for the whole discussion of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion: given their early dates, any later magician or theologian who interacted with ritual traditions of demon compulsion as described in these texts would have been forced to confront such ideas of purity as requisite for obtaining God's favor and to find equivalents or differences according to their purposes and circumstances.

I highlight the term "purity" also to underscore a historiographic case. The persistence of the condition of purity as referring to the requisite state of the ritual specialist speaks to the continued inclusion of ancient Jewish ideas and practices of purity (such as abstinences and ablutions) alongside medieval and early modern additions – this procrustean bed of purity as requisite condition for achieving power over demons as associated with the apocryphal Solomonic tradition persists into many later contexts in fairly consistent, recognizable forms. For example, any number of revisions or re-elaborations of "purity" by both magicians and theologians within the relatively constant framework of the tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion bears witness – as will be seen – to the historical recognition of Levitical purity, sacramental grace, faith, and even predestination as various possible answers to the persistent question of what merits the

[14] See specifically *PMG IV 3007-86*, which refers specifically to Solomon: "A tested charm of Pibechis for those possessed by daimons." See also *PGM XII. 270-350*: "A Ring. A little ring for success and favor and victory." This example does not specifically refer to Solomon but does describe a ritual for the creation of a ring with very similar demon-compelling powers to that of Solomon. See: Betz, 96f. and 163-5, respectively.

favor of God in both the practices of certain forms of illicit magic and of orthodox theology. Furthermore, the textual record appears to indicate that as magicians made new elaborations of these rituals, their prescriptions for the personal preparation of the magician reflected – to a great extent – religious and confessional ideas of "purity" according to changing orthodox theologies. In chapter 1 below, I will pursue how the ancient Jewish roots of the medieval Christian discourse on Solomonic demon compulsion provide a point of departure for a comparison among ideas of purity within the narrative tradition; subsequent chapters will trace other iterations of the idea of purity.

For the present, it suffices to note that the subject of purity is both well attested and thoroughly researched by scholars who have dealt extensively with both magical and non-magical cultic practices of ancient Judaism (the details of which will be found in the next chapter). Perhaps the most useful of these for the structure of my argument is anthropologist Mary Douglas' critical afterword to historian Jacob Neusner's book, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism*, in which Neusner speculates on the changes in understandings of purity within Judaism from the period of ca. 300 BCE to ca. 700 CE. Neusner and Douglas point to a tendency toward "spiritualizing and metaphoricizing" purity rules in ancient Judaism. This tendency, I believe, continues within Christianity as it, too, spread beyond a single locus or community:

> The holiness of the Temple is a focal point of the purity rules of the biblical legacy. In the later periods, sectarian communities constituted themselves in relation to the Temple and revived purity rules to signify their apartness and holiness: so the Pharisees, the Qumran and the Zealots. For them the symbolism of the Temple does not come to rest upon a building; the Temple itself signifies their godly community. The further from the Temple in time or space, the more the tendency to spiritualise and metaphoricise the rules: so Philo and Hebrews.

> With one modification, this is extremely convincing. Any sect tends to define itself with purity rules whether a biblical corpus lies at hand or not. I would modify the conclusion by suggesting that the further from membership of a sectarian group, the more the tendency to turn purity rules into metaphors of spiritual good instead of regulations for daily entrances and exits and rankings.[15]

While both Neusner's claims and Douglas' emendations deal explicitly only with ancient Judaism, they nevertheless have interesting implications for the present project.

I suggest that the same tendency toward spiritualizing and metaphoricizing cultic purity rules can be observed within Christianity as its various sects move farther away in time and space from the understood physical presence of the divine after the crucifixion of Jesus.[16] As ancient Judaism's concern for achieving and maintaining a state of purity is supplanted in medieval Catholicism by a concern for achieving and maintaining a state of grace through sacramental (mediated) grace, so Catholic ideas of a state of grace are replaced in early modern Protestantism by ideas of the unmediated grace of "faith" and, later, even predestination or election.[17] Douglas' emendation to Neusner's conclusion concerning the effect of one's degree of separation from the Temple on the tendency toward metaphorical versus physical understandings of purity may also account for the

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[15] Jacob Neusner and Mary Douglas, *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism: The Haskell Lectures, 1972-1973* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973) 141.

[16] The religious significance of the Temple as well as changes to cultic purity laws that come about with increased distance from it must be approached in light of the belief that the God of the Hebrews was believed to physically dwell in the Holy of Holies within the Temple. Thus, Douglas' reference to the increased distance "in time and space" between the Jews and the Temple may be understood to implicate both the physical center of cultic worship and the understood physical presence of the divine. This view of the Temple as signifying the physical presence of God informs the Christian comparison of Jesus to the Temple. See especially John 2:18-22: "So the Jews said to him, 'What sign do you show us for doing these things?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking about the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken." The bible quotes given in this project are all from the New American Standard Bible (NASB) unless otherwise indicated.

[17] Interestingly enough, election seems to exist at least partly as a response to the idea of total depravity, which may be understood as a complete lack of confidence in the efficacy of ritual purification and *not* as an abandonment of the idea of spiritual pollution. We will return to a brief discussion of predestination and election as spiritualized "purity" in the conclusion of the project.

occasional reemergence of very literal understandings of purity within magical traditions. For example, medieval and early modern magicians identified more with the ancient sectarian groups (e.g. Jewish and Neo-Platonic pagan) from whose philosophies they derived their magical practices than did their contemporaries. As a result – it may be argued – they often co-emphasized physical and spiritual purity rather than focusing only on the spiritualized and metaphoricized purity of Douglas' hypothesis as did their coevals.

That observation grounds my inclusion of various texts in the present project. Douglas' claim that sects tend to define themselves by means of purity laws suggests that it may be possible – to some extent – to identify the confessional affiliations or inclinations of the authors of certain anonymous or pseudoepigraphic magical texts. The logic is straightforward: if a sect defines itself by its purity laws, so too do the purity laws describe the sect. The implications of this are particularly interesting with regard to sixteenth-century texts of demonic magic, which – chronologically – could be either Catholic or Protestant, but a number of which have not been conclusively sourced. Some of these texts include ideas of faith, predestination, and election that are consistent with contemporaneous Protestant theology, but not with contemporaneous Catholic theology.[18] In such cases, the idea of predestination functioning as purity within the ritual texts would imply the existence of an early modern Protestant practice of demonic magic – a practice so often cast as a product and survival (in the Tylorian sense)[19] of the "Catholic

[18] We refer here to *Arbatel* and the aforementioned *Book of Abramelin the Mage*, to both of which we return briefly in the conclusion to the present project.

[19] The anthropological meaning of the term "survival" is credited to the late nineteenth century, British anthropologist E. B. Tylor, who defined it in his 1871 book, *Primitive Culture*, as follows: "processes, customs, and opinions, and so forth, which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had

Middle Ages." Both Neusner's and Douglas' observations may thus potentially be used to address the question of *who* was practicing demonic magic and offer guidance as to how we might begin to answer such questions about the practitioner by examining the contours and presuppositions of the ritual.

The shared narrative tradition of Solomon's demon compulsion, which extends from late antique Judaism through medieval Catholicism into early modern Protestantism allows us to suggest that the idea of a state of faith, and even predestination or election – even more than the idea of a state of grace – is an extreme form of metaphoricized purity within a continuum that begins with Levitical purity laws. Even as religious and confessional constructs are transformed across time, it is easy to trace how grace, faith, predestination, and election come to occupy the same space within ritual demon compulsion as that which ritual or cultic purity had earlier occupied within ritual demon compulsion: the terms all describe requisite states of the exorcist or magician.

Scholars like Bronislaw Malinowski confirm that it is legitimate to generalize about such transformations in individual criteria within a ritual paradigm. For instance, in his discussion of Trobriander magic in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Malinowski describes "the condition of the performer" as essential to magic:

> […] magic all the world over, however rudimentary or developed it might be, presents three essential aspects. In its performance there are always some words spoken or chanted, some actions carried out, and there are always ministers of the ceremony. In analyzing the concrete details of magical performances, therefore, we have to distinguish the *formula*, the *rite*, and *the condition of the performer*.[20]

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their original home, and they thus remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer has been evolved." Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (New York: J. P. Putnam's Sons, 1920 [1871]) 16.

[20] Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1960 [1922]) 404.

Malinowski's insight into the tripartite nature of magic is borne out in the accounts of Solomonic demon compulsion discussed in the present study, as well. In them, "purity" is the primary condition of the performer for the ritual compulsion of demons. The present project takes such substitutions as critical to trace, as evidence of continuities across time and across religious schisms and divides among confessions. To ignore such commonalities means to overlook defining aspects of arguments that emerge in historical contexts where they flag specific transformations.

Malinowski's definition of "three essential aspects" as the basis of that which he calls magic is critical to my strategy of argumentation. The accounts of Solomonic demon compulsion that come down to us, including the ritual texts themselves, consistently speak to all three of these elements, albeit with varying degrees of attention, and thus do belong to the domain of "magic," as defined by scholarship in Malinowski's tradition. In the historical documentation, the names and the astrological associations of demons, the names of the angels with the power to contain them, and the sacred names of God by which the demons are adjured usually make up the bulk of the *formulae*.[21] The *rite*, too, is present in extant accounts (if not always in great detail) as descriptions or prescriptions of where, when, and how the magician should attempt to summon, compel, and dismiss the demons. Finally, the requirements for the *condition of the performer* are variously expressed in terms of physical or spiritualized and metaphoricized purity. These are

[21] In *Magic in the Middle Ages*, Richard Kieckhefer offers a definition of necromancy as "[e]ssentially […] a merger of astral magic and exorcism." While this often appears to be the case in manuals of medieval magic, Kieckhefer's definition seems problematic in the context of the present study in that the implied dichotomy would seem to essentialize astrology as "magical" and exorcism as "religious" without sufficient regard for the ancient provenances of astrological cosmologies as "religious" and pre-medieval conceptions of demon compulsion without anachronistic distinction between exorcism (in the modern sense) and demonic magic. See: Kieckhefer 165-172.

described either directly, as a precondition of a successful ritual, or by implication in the form of praise of Solomon's great virtue that moved God to grant him the authority over demons which the magician seeks to embody.

Yet the evidence that I will adduce in the present project introduces a caution into any blanket acceptance of Malinowski's observation. Significantly, the textual evidence for Western ritual demon compulsion suggests that the magicians and theologians concerned with Solomonic demon compulsion came to prioritize the "three essential aspects" by which Malinowski defines the practice magic differently than did his Trobriander informants in ways that suggest differences between pre-axial and post-axial magic.

Malinowski's analysis of Trobriander magic contains explicit evidence, which allows me to use his definitions, even if its elements are reprioritized. For example, he notes that, "To the direct question of the subject, the natives always reply that the spell is the more important part." The real strength of the magic is understood to be in the spell. He continues, "The condition of the magician is, like the rite, essential to the performance of the magic, but it also is considered by the natives as subservient to the spell."[22] It should not surprise us, then, that such elements as Malinowski's informants regarded as the most powerful were also understand to be the most valuable, and therefore to be guarded most carefully:

> The spell is the part of the magic which is kept secret and known only to the esoteric circle of practitioners. When a magic is handed over, whether by purchase, gift, or inheritance, only the spell has to be taught to the new recipient

[22] Malinowski 418.

> […]. When one speaks about magical knowledge, or inquires whether an individual knows some magic, this invariably refers to the formula, for the nature of the rite is always quite public knowledge.[23]

The similarities of Malinowski's data to the accounts of Solomonic demon compulsion that I treat below are striking. As with Trobriander magic, the "magic" of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion consists primarily of formula – the litanies of the names of demons and angels, and the sacred Names of God. Moreover, both Malinowski's oral evidence and my written sources admonish their readers against revealing these secrets too the uninitiated. The *Liber Consecratus*, for example, a fourteenth century magical manual,[24] instructs its user to keep it carefully concealed so it does not fall into the hands "of the foolish."[25] Likewise, the author of the *Sepher Razielis* known from a sixteenth century copy admonishes the reader that, "Semiforas [the ineffable and efficacious name of God] is a word which ought not to be shown to all men, neither by it ought any man to work (except with great necessity or anguish)."[26]

However, unlike with Malinowski's observation of the Trobrianders, the present study reveals that concern with the *condition of the performer* of Solomonic magic seems to have increased over time – even to the point of eclipsing the *formula* as "the more important part" in magical texts of the early modern period. It is this change which I take as indicative of the shift toward a literate, axial religion and thus a literate, axial magic.

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[23] Malinowski 418.

[24] The first definite mention of the *Liber Consecratus* (also known as the *Sworn Book of Honorius*, *Liber Juratus, Liber Sacer*, and *Liber Sacratus*), which was purportedly written by Honorius of Thebes, is in the 1347 trial record of Olivier Pepin from Mende, France. The oldest extant manuscript copy, Sloane MS 3854 (fol 117-144), also dates from the fourteenth century. See Jan Buhlman, "Notice of the *Liber juratus* in Early Fourteenth-century France," Societas Magica Newsletter 14.4 [Fall, 2005] 4.

[25] Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge u.a: Cambridge Univ. Pr, 2009) 163.

[26] See Don Karr and Stephen Skinner, *Sepher Raziel* (Llewellyn Worldwide Ltd, 2010) 216.

These changes are evident in both manuals of ritual magic and anti-magic theology of Solomonic demon compulsion, and I will point to them in the texts to be discussed in the chapters below as evidence of commonality: as a reason to consider evidence which, on initial inspection, seems to belong to different categories as part of the same *tradition* of argument.

Defining Evidence for Solomonic Demon Compulsion: Not a *Corpus*, but a *Narrative Tradition*

The theoretical point I have just made about associating evidence that initially might seem disparate has a corollary point: criteria such as those Malinowski adduces to define magic – his "three essential aspects" – exist in the forms of traditions expressed within the cultures of their users. In working with the narrative of Solomon's demon compulsion, we are working with a broadly familiar tradition: pieces of it are tucked into some of the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all of which, in turn, use the account in their respective canonical sacred texts to ground their narrative traditions (not as direct models for the story-telling). That narrative *tradition* provided both the exorcist and the magician with the paradigmatic models for their practice, yet it is not preserved in any single, authoritative, or canonical account: none of the extant texts provides what could be understood as a clear, complete origin story, but rather appear to presuppose their audiences' familiarity with this apocryphal aspect of Solomon's biography.[27] Far

[27] There is reason to consider that the magicization of the figure of Solomon was itself a response to expectations of mythic kingship in the Hellenized world. I.e., what was true of kings and pharaohs should also be true of Solomon if he were to continue to be considered a great king. Other scholars have argued this. For example, L. H. Feldman has

more detail about how Solomon came to have (and to lose) this power is found at and beyond the borders of orthodoxy – many texts record only *allusions* or *embellishments* to that traditional narrative material, and not the main narrative itself.

Significantly for the case of the practice of Solomonic demon compulsion over time, it is apocryphal religious texts, many of which have been recovered only relatively recently after being lost (or suppressed) for centuries that give some of the most detailed accounts.[28] The writings of early apologists and historians – now only selectively recollected by their successors – also provide significant details as a natural consequence of their antagonistic polemics.

For the same reason, another important source for recovering the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons is the theological record of orthodox Catholicism's battle against demonic magic. For example, the eighth century German *Homily on Sacrilegious Practices* of Pseudo-Augustine condemns as pagans those who produce the writings of Solomon and fashion charms or phylacteries with them; as it does so, it provides some small amount of detail about what Malinowski would classify as

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studied the treatment of several biblical figures in the writings of Josephus and maintains that the figure of Solomon is Hellenized to appeal to the Hellenized Jew and educated Greek in Josephus audience. See: Louis Feldman, "Josephus as an Apologist to the Greco-Roman World: His Portrait of Solomon," *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity,* edited by Elisabeth Fiorenza-Schüssler (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976) 69–98, especially 87-92. However, it is absolutely unnecessary for Josephus to have been the instigator of this turn in the depiction of Solomon. In fact, we argue that Josephus' depiction of Solomon functioned because it argued *with* popular expectation and not *against* it. By this logic, then, it is at least possible that the "Solomonic" exorcism Josephus' *Antiquities* (discussed in the following chapter) is *both* the earliest representative account of this type of depiction of Solomon *and* effectively incomplete. In this case, Josephus' task would not be to establish an expectation (e.g. an entire narrative of Solomon's semi-divine power), but rather merely to confirm that what was held to be true of other great kings was also true of Solomon. In this case, we would need to look to the narratives Hellenic kings and pharaohs in order to trace this narrative any further back, and not to search (in vain) for older narratives of Solomon's power over demons. See also: Pablo A. Torijano, *Solomon, the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 38f.

[28] Two such examples are related: the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* and *The Testament of Solomon*. Both will be treated in chapter 1.

formula and rite.[29] Likewise, in his *Historia Scholastica* (ca. 1170), Petrus Comestor ascribed all the magic books and paraphernalia current in his time to Solomon.[30] Thomas Aquinas, too, acknowledged just enough of this apocryphal chapter of Solomon's biography to record a version of it as he forbade any attempt at emulating it in his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66).[31] Still greater detail comes to us from the many ritual texts themselves – bits and scraps or even entire books of "magic" that orthodox theologians failed to eliminate. Pieces and evidence of the rituals for demon compulsion that survive – often against all odds – on everything from papyrus to parchment, amulets to potsherds, were framed as part of the legacy of Solomon's apotropaic powers and thus allow us to reconstruct at least much of what was believable, if not all of what was believed (and practiced) in these narrative and ritual traditions.

The present study thus does not presume to examine the full textual record of Solomonic demon compulsion across so much time and space as it actually occupies, nor across every affected source type and religion. Not only would there be difficulties in creating a coherent corpus of texts, given such large amounts of data, but the indeterminate provenance of many of the sources and the multifarious religious contexts would necessitate essentializing "Solomonic magic" in a methodologically fatal way. In

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[29] See Gager's discussion of the *Homily on Sacrilegious Practices* of Pseudo-Augustine in: John G. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 167. Gager notes that the text emanates geographically from Germany and chronologically is from the eighth century C.E. He translates the quite ordinary Latin of the popular sermon (Ch 6 § 19) as follows: "Whoever produces writings of Solomon, whoever ties around the neck of humans or dumb animals any characters, whether on papyrus, on parchment, or or metal tablets made from bronze, iron, lead, or any other material, such a person is not a Christian but a pagan" (167). The Latin original is published in C.P. Caspari, *Eine Augustin fälschlich begelegte Homilia de sacrilegiis* (Christiania, 1886), 263f.

[30] Trachtenberg 63f.

[31] We will return to this in the next chapter.

consequence, this study follows the *narrative trope* of Solomon's demon compulsion as a tradition (as related to narrative, rather than texts), and only within Christian discourse. That said, Jewish examples from late antiquity are included (including examples recorded later which reflect Jewish practices from that earlier time), as they play a role in how Christian authorities defined their own practice – both as original model and later as polemical counterfoil. However, the use of the trope of Solomon's demon compulsion in later Jewish traditions falls outside the scope of this study, as does any discussion of Solomon's power over the jinn in Islamic tradition.[32] After the initial break with Judaism in late antiquity, the idea of Solomon's power over demons became an internal concern shaping the demonological and moral theology of magic where the paradigmatic trope was not only preserved, but also even cultivated. The notable (partial) exception of the medieval satirical Jewish anti-Christian tract, the *Toledot Yeshu*, will be discussed in chapters 2 and 4.

What emerges as a fruitful corpus for investigating this narrative and ritual tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion, then, is a series of situated conversations

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[32] See, for example: Surah 21:81-82 "And to Solomon [We subjected] the wind, blowing forcefully, proceeding by his command toward the land which We had blessed. And We are ever, of all things, Knowing. And of the devils were those who dived for him and did work other than that. And We were of them a guardian." See also Surah 27:38-40 [Solomon] said, "O assembly [of jinn], which of you will bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?" A powerful one from among the jinn said, "I will bring it to you before you rise from your place, and indeed, I am for this [task] strong and trustworthy." Said one who had knowledge from the Scripture, "I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you." And when [Solomon] saw it placed before him, he said, "This is from the favor of my Lord to test me whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful - his gratitude is only for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever is ungrateful - then indeed, my Lord is Free of need and Generous." See also Surah 34:12-14 "And to Solomon [We subjected] the wind - its morning [journey was that of] a month - and its afternoon [journey was that of] a month, and We made flow for him a spring of [liquid] copper. And among the jinn were those who worked for him by the permission of his Lord. And whoever deviated among them from Our command - We will make him taste of the punishment of the Blaze. They made for him what he willed of elevated chambers, statues, bowls like reservoirs, and stationary kettles. [We said], "Work, O family of David, in gratitude." And few of My servants are grateful. And when We decreed for Solomon death, nothing indicated to the jinn his death except a creature of the earth eating his staff. But when he fell, it became clear to the jinn that if they had known the unseen, they would not have remained in humiliating punishment. All quotations are from Sahih International Version.

between Christian authorities and those whom they would convert or coerce into their respective forms of orthodoxy. These encounters exemplify how by manipulating the definition of "purity" in a system of expectation (God's) and authorization (man's), Christian religious authorities sought to establish and maintain jurisdiction over intervention into the chain of supernatural causation which incentivized demon compulsion in the first place.[33] In other words, around the central notion of purity, I am establishing a corpus of conversations (some more complete, some more fragmented), each of which represents a moment in an evolving tradition of understanding and mobilizing traditional apocryphal narratives of Solomonic demon compulsion by using and altering one of its criteria: the *condition of the performer*.

My goal in establishing such a corpus around the concept of purity in Solomonic demon compulsion and exploring how it was used to establish or claim religious authority is twofold. First, the analyses that I offer in the chapters which follow take an impetus like Malinowski's into textual studies, allowing me to focus on the logics and expectations underlying textual representations as much as or more than the irregular forms of available records.

My second goal is historical, aiming at describing the persistent effects of certain traditional criteria (i.e. purity) within theological arguments, even across confessional lines. By comparing the arguments of successive Christian authorities (first the early apologists, then Scholastic theologians, and finally the Protestant reformer, Martin Luther) to contemporaneous textual examples of demon compelling rituals, I will show

[33] Clark offers a helpful discussion of the ramifications of demonology as a natural science. See: Stuart Clark *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford [etc.: University Press, 2005) 153.

how what most likely began as a late antique straw man in the Christian polemic against Judaism came to define much of the actual pursuit and practice as well as the prohibition of *nigromantia* (demonic magic) for the next millennium and a half. That is: I will show that orthodoxy was in large part responsible for the creation of its own ideal enemy – the priest created the sorcerer, and both appeared in specific variants appropriate for local evolutions of Christian theology.

The Solomon Narrative(s) as Paradigm: A Mode of "Magical Thinking"

The apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons is of interest to us for the same reason that it was of interest to the exorcists, magicians, apologists, and theologians to be discussed in this study: it provided a sense of religious authorization and legitimation to do what Solomon had done – to compel the demons that populated the imaginations of the ancient Hellenized world.

The "demons" involved had many faces, as they were drawn into these narrative traditions. The respective cosmologies of Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, and Persians all included hierarchies of intermediary beings between the gods and humanity.[34] These demons (from the Greek "δαίμων" or "daimon") were thought to be the invisible actors behind all sorts of otherwise inexplicable causation, from weather and illness (possession) in particular, to success or failure in general. Thus, the power to control demons not only protected one from the threats presented by these intermediary beings, it also granted the one who could control them a greater degree of agency within the causal

[34] A.O. Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being* (1942) is perhaps the most famous modern discussion of intermediary forms.

chain in which humanity was thought to be exclusively on the receiving end of every yank or ripple. Those who could compel such forces wielded super-human power, even if only by proxy. The persistence of such belief during the formation of early Christianity (as will be discussed in Chapter 1 below) facilitated both the rhetorical logic of compelling demons in the name of Jesus and the persistence of the Solomon narrative.[35]

The numerous charms, amulets, and manuals of ritual magic that claim association with Solomon – the textual record – show that connecting oneself and one's own ritual to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons represented both efficacy and legitimacy. For example, a charm from the Greek Magical Papyri (to be examined further in the following chapter) makes much of compelling the demon to which the formula is addressed "by the seal that Solomon used." Interestingly, however, no seal – no graphic representation or written description of it – is included in the text. In this and numerous other, similar, charms, it seems to have been thought sufficient to make the allusion to Solomon's seal without actually reproducing it.[36]

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[35] For example, in the writing of Origen (c. 184 CE - c. 253), to whom we will return in the following chapter, we find a logic that presupposes a Great Chain of Being. In his *Fourteenth Homily on Numbers*, for example, he writes: "And what is so pleasant, what is so magnificent as the work of he sun or moon by whom the world is illuminated? Yet there is work in the world itself too for angels who are over beasts and for angels who preside over earthly armies. There is work for angels who preside over the nativity of animals, of seedlings, of plantations, and many other growths. And again there is work for angels who preside over holy works, who teach the comprehension of eternal light and the knowledge of God's secrets and the science of divine things." See: Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science: Vol. 1* (New York, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 1970) 454. Likewise, in his *De Principiis* 1.8, we read, "[…] nor are we to suppose that it is the result of accident that a particular office is assigned to a particular angel: as to Raphael, e.g. the work of curing and healing; to Gabriel, the conduct of wars; to prayers and supplications of mortals. For we are not to imagine that they obtained these offices otherwise than by their own merits, and by the zeal and excellent qualities which they severally displayed before the world was formed; so that afterwards, in the order of archangels, this or that office was assigned to each one, while others deserved to be enrolled in the order of angels, and to act under this or that archangel, or that leader or head of an order." See: *Ante-nicene Fathers: 4*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 1979) 264f.

[36] "Solomon's seal" also belongs to this narrative tradition. Like other elements of the narrative, descriptions of it are often quite vague. The ambiguity of the seal within the traditional narratives appears to have contributed to the durability of the motif by establishing an expectation of a specific piece of magical knowledge (i.e. Malinowski's "*formula*"). I note here that in many accounts within the narrative tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion, the seal of

Certainly, there were charms, amulets, and ritual manuals with other pseudoepigraphic attributions. Among ancient and medieval Jewish examples of such texts and artifacts, we find pseudoepigraphic attributions to Moses, Joseph, and others.[37] In Christian examples, we find St. Cyprian, Honorius of Thebes,[38] Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, and even St. Thomas Aquinas![39] Allusion to these, however, failed to produce nearly as many new texts (or prompt the "rediscovery" as many "lost" ones) as did allusion to Solomon. The Solomon example seems to have had particular significance over a long period of time, based on the sheer number of its appearances.

In making such claims, however, we should be cautious to maintain the distinction between the association of magic with the figure of Solomon and the pseudoepigraphic attribution of a magical charm or text to the person of Solomon – each is a different logic of association. While these logics of association are not mutually exclusive, nor are they are necessarily mutually inclusive. Consider: the pseudepigraphic attribution of a *theological* text, for example, to a recognized authority such as Augustine of Hippo serves to lend the authority to the content of the assertion(s) in the text. This, in fact, is the case with the aforementioned eighth century prohibition against Solomonic

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Solomon includes the ineffable and efficacious name of God - the literal "*formula*" for compelling demons - and, furthermore, that according to many accounts the seal was thought to have been inscribed on Solomon's ring.

[37] See Salzer's discussion of multiple specific allusive biblical referents: Dorothea M. Salzer, *Die Magie der Anspielung: Form und Funktion der Biblischen Anspielungen in den Magischen Texten der Kairoer Geniza* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 221-245.

[38] "Honorius of Thebes, a possibly mythical character from the Middle Ages, is said to have authored *The Sworn Book of Honorius*, although the first printed manuscript of this work did not appear until 1629. Considerable mystery still exists about the identity of Honorius, both Pope Honorius I and Pope Honorius III have been linked to the character. Honorius of Thebes is also claimed to be the creator of the Theban alphabet, in Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia* (1531) and Johannes Trithemius' *Polygraphia* (1518). According to the *Sworn Book of Honorius*, he is supposed to be 'the son of Euclid, master of the Thebians.' But the book delivers no source to whom this might be.

[39] See: Robert Mathiesen, "A Thirteenth Century Ritual to Attain the Beatific Vision from the Sworn Book of Honorius of Thebes," *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic*, edited by Claire Fanger, (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015) 143–162, here 143.

demon compulsion by the anonymous writer now identified as Pseudo-Augustine. By contrast, the attribution of a type or tradition of magic to Solomon as a recognized "magician" lends the assumption of efficacy to the content of the ritual act: authority vs. efficacy.

Nonetheless, the significance of the figure of Solomon was never in doubt. Solomon's fame (or infamy) as demon conjurer is attested in examples from the first century well into the seventeenth. In this sense, Solomon was the magical equivalent of "a brand you can trust." Other objects of such pseudoepigraphic attribution, such as Honorius of Thebes, Thomas Aquinas, and others, simply did not have the sort of reputations to sustain credible allusion in the way that Solomon had. In particular, in the popular imagination, they lacked an association with power over demons. The promise of a magical formula attributed to Solomon thus lay not so much in the belief that Solomon himself had written it, but rather in the belief that it would reveal how the great Solomon had achieved the feats upon which his reputation for demon compulsion was founded. The pseudepigraphic value of a magical manual thought to have been written by Solomon was in the promise of an authoritative account of his process, which was already recognized as effective (even if illicit) thanks to consistent apocryphal, pseudoepigraphic, patristic, and theological acknowledgement of it, which, by comparison, was lacking in the magical pseudepigrapha of Thomas Aquinas, for instance.

Nor was this association only the stuff of the often particularly fantastical discourse of manuals of ritual magic. By all accounts, medieval Catholic theologians themselves took quite seriously the narrative tradition concerning Solomon's power over

demons – the narrative was of equal interest to both those inside and those outside of institutional power structures. In addition to Aquinas, already mentioned, Peter Cantor (died 1197), William of Auvergne (c. 1180/90-1249), and Thomas of Chobham (c. 1160-1233/36) all treated of Solomon's relationship to licit or illicit magic in their respective theological works. Indeed, as Joshua Trachtenberg points out in *The Devil and the Jews*, "Petrus Comestor, in his *Historia Scholastica*, written about 1170, ascribed all the magic books and paraphernalia current in his time to Solomon."[40] Trachtenberg further notes, that so established was the belief in Solomon's power to compel demons that, by the later Middle Ages, demonic magic and the name of Solomon were nearly synonymous:

> The Solomon cycle of legends merits special attention since it seems to have made a particularly strong impression upon the medieval imagination. These legends possessed two main elements: the wise monarch's dominion over the devil and demons and his utilization of this power for magical ends. This latter theme was developed with all kinds of variations, so that Solomon came to be regarded both as the type of the sorcerer and the original source of occult science. So deeply did the belief in his magical supremacy enter into medieval thought that nothing more was required to authenticate the worth of a formula or an amulet than to trace it to him, and the most popular magical works drew their authority from his reputation.[41]

Thus at the time, it is not surprising that magicians not only sought to avail themselves of Solomon's wisdom, but also to attempt what Solomon had accomplished in compelling demons – to act *in loco Salomonis*. It is equally unsurprising, then, that the theologians not only sought to suppress texts attributed to Solomon, but also to forbid any attempt at recreating his process. The concern both on the side of magicians and of the anti-magic

[40] Trachtenberg 64.
[41] Trachtenberg 63.

theologians was one of the significance of imitating Solomon, as I will expand upon in Chapter 2 below.

For the present, it suffices to note that scholars have found great interest in this two-fold effect of pseudoepigraphic attribution, asking how, then, did the magician seek to connect his (or much more rarely her) ritual acts to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons? And why was doing so thought to confer efficacy and legitimacy?

Dorothea Salzer addresses these questions with her examination of biblical allusion in the magical texts of the Cairo Geniza in her book, *Die Magie der Anspielung: Form und Funktion der biblischen Anspielungen in den magischen Texten der Kairoer Geniza* (*The Magic of Allusion: Form and Function of biblical allusion in the magical texts of the Cairo Geniza*, 2010). Salzer notes the tendency of magicians to try to connect their magical acts to biblical figures as I have described, locating it in numerous magical texts found in the Cairo Geniza, a collection of texts including some 300,000 manuscript fragments from the storeroom or "geniza," (thence the name) of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat, or Old Cairo, Egypt. The Hebrew, Arabic, and Aramaic manuscripts that constitute the geniza span a period of more than a thousand years, from around 870 CE to the nineteenth century, and by no means are they all magical in nature. Rather, they reflect a range of the religious and magical as well as the political and economic activities of Jews in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.

In Salzer's corpus – those texts of the Cairo Geniza that are explicitly magical –, she identifies allusions not only to Solomon, but also to David, Moses, the prophets, and

even to God himself. "The choice of person whose words the magician uses is in no way coincidental," she writes. "Rather, it frequently involves particularly prominent figures from biblical history."[42] Salzer's investigation leads her to conclude that these allusions have both syntagmatic and paradigmatic functions. Thus, the choice of biblical figure to whom the magician alludes in his or her formula must be understood in the context of the magician's intention for the magical act. The syntagmatic function of such allusions "encompasses the role and meaning of an allusion within the text." The paradigmatic function of biblical allusion, by contrast, "refers to the mode of a text's semantic expansion through the use of *allusion* as well as the *associations* that are thus made possible,"[43] [emphasis added]. Salzer goes on to specify the following main paradigmatic functions of the biblical allusions in her corpus: authorization, legitimation, basis for efficacy, orientation toward clientele, and orientation in the address.[44]

It is the latter, paradigmatic function that primarily directs the present discussion of the Solomon figure in the texts and practices of demonic magic for we are concerned with the intertextuality (expansion) of the phenomenon of Solomonic demon compulsion. The chapters that follow trace one particular set of associations with Solomon – those of

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[42] The English translation is my own. Salzer's German reads, "Die Wahl der Personen, deren Worte der Magier übernimmt, ist keineswegs zufällig. Vielmehr handelt es sich dabei vor allem um besonders prominente Personen der biblischen Geschichte." See: Dorothea M. Salzer, *Die Magie der Anspielung: Form und Funktion der Biblischen Anspielungen in den Magischen Texten der Kairoer Geniza* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 221.

[43] The English translation is my own. Salzer's original German is as follows: "Während der Begriff, syntagmatische Funktion' die Rolle und Bedeutung einer Anspielung innerhalb des manifesten Textes umfaßt, richtet sich die Frage nach den paradigmatischen Funktionen einer Anspielung auf die Art und Weise der semantischen Erweiterungen, welche der manifeste Texte durch die Applikation einer Anspielung und die dadurch eröffneten Assoziationen erfährt. [...] Was bedeutet es, wenn in den magischen Texten der biblische Prätext evoziert wird? Welche Folgen hat dies für den manifesten Text und für das Verständnis der magischen Handlung?" Dorothea M. Salzer, *Die Magie der Anspielung: Form und Funktion der Biblischen Anspielungen in den Magischen Texten der Kairoer Geniza* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 218.

[44] Salzer's terms in the original German are as follows: Autorisierung, Legitimation, Wirksamkeitsbegründing, Klientenausrichtung, Adressenausrichtung. Dorothea M. Salzer, *Die Magie der Anspielung: Form und Funktion der Biblischen Anspielungen in den Magischen Texten der Kairoer Geniza* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010) 218.

his demon compulsion. And, furthermore, they demonstrate how the popularity of the figure of Solomon in both magic and anti-magic theology may be attributed to the versatility of the allusive potential in the paradigmatic apocryphal narrative connected with him: with demons a magician can do anything.

That such allusions have particular power in these contexts is not simply an assumption of Salzer. Her idea of allusion as a magical thought process joins neatly to the well-established framework of Sir James George Frazer's "Law of Sympathy," put forward in *The Golden Bough* (1890).[45] Salzer's claim is that allusion enables association, and, according to Frazer, association – false association – is the foundation of homeopathic magic.[46] Despite the obvious affinity, however, Salzer does not appeal directly to Frazer. Instead, she accounts for the idea of association through allusion – the magical thinking – by drawing on Schumacher's prior work on the historiola and *Analogiezauber* (analogy magic),[47] as well as Assmann's idea of "*unio liturgica*."[48] On this foundation, Salzer proposes the concept of "*unio magica*" which she defines as follows:

> In the context of the present investigation, this term [*unio magica*] applied to the magical texts of the Cairo Geniza and the question at hand, indicates the phenomenon of the magician's merging with a particular biblical figure during magical acts through the application of bible verses. Through equation with this

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[45] Frazer first published *The Golden Bough* in two volumes in 1890; then a second edition in three volumes in 1900; and finally, the third edition comprising twelve volumes, in 1906–15.

[46] See: James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1963) 13f.

[47] Meinolf Schumacher, "Geschichtenerzählzauber: Die Merseburger Zaubersprüche und die Funktion der Historiola im Magischen Ritual," Ed. Rüdiger Zymner. *Erzählte Welt - Welt des Erzählens: Festschrift für Dietrich Weber* (Köln: Edition Chōra, 2000). 201-15, here 203.

[48] Jan Assmann, "Unio Liturgica: Die Kultische Einstimmung in Götterweltlichen Lobpreis als Grundmotiv 'Esoterischer' Überlieferung im Alten Ägypten," *Secrecy and Concealment* (Leiden: Brill, 1995): 37-60, especially 46-58; 60.

> figure his authority transfers to the person of the magician who can consequently use the authoritative power of the biblical person for his own ends.[49]

What Salzer calls "biblical allusion" must be modified here to accommodate apocryphal narrative tradition as well, but as such allusion to the apocryphal narrative tradition of Solomon in ritual magic may be interpreted as an intentional effort to merge with Solomon specifically. Consequently, the paradigmatic functions of the allusion are *Solomon's* authorization and legitimation, *his* basis for efficacy, an orientation toward *Solomon's* clientele, and orientation of *his* address. The Solomonic magician thus alludes to the apocryphal narrative of a Solomon who – as we will describe below – treated demons as slaves or personal servants. Contrariwise, analogous allusion to the Jesus of canonical narratives – *unio magica* with a Jesus who does not use demons as slaves – would not serve the magician who wants Solomon's relationship (as described in the apocryphal narrative) with demons and not that of Jesus.

Defining Magic: A Tradition as Corpus

At this point, it is useful to return to the problem of defining the corpus on which this study is based, as a way to consolidate the study design premises I have been reviewing in this introduction. In them lie the justifications for – considering what might initially sound like a limited problem – a significant address to the greater study of early modern magic and theological thought. To make that case, I will, before summarizing the

[49] The English translation is my own. Salzer's original German is as follows: "Auf die magischen Texte der Kairoer Geniza und hier behandelte Fragestellung übertragen soll dieser Begriff im Rahmen der vorliegenden Untersuchung das Phänomen bezeichnen, daß der Magier durch die Applikation von Bibelversen während der magischen Handlung mit einer bestimmten biblischen Figur verschmilzt. Durch die Gleichsetzung mit dieser Figur geht deren Autorität auf die Person des Magiers über, und der Magier kann folglich die autoritative Machtpotenz der biblischen Person für seine Zwecke verwenden" (220).

chapters that follow, address some of the objections that might still be raised about my analyses.

The most significant objection may be raised in how I adapt my theoretical models. Malinowski's work sets up the possibility of a syntagmatic and paradigmatic approach to my corpus, as I have argued above. However, Salzer's study theorizes the functions of biblical allusion in general (i.e. not just allusions to Solomon) within the context of a specific corpus of magical texts – the texts of the Cairo Geniza. All of the texts in Salzer's corpus were found in a single synagogue storeroom, and thus represent the thoughts and practices of a narrowly definable community. By contrast, the present study is concerned with the biblical figure of Solomon specifically in magical texts more generally.

The corpus on which the present study is based is in many respects broader if not larger. Significantly, whereas the texts of the Cairo Geniza can all be reliably associated with a single Jewish community in Old Cairo, the texts addressed in the present study belonged to multiple communities over a wide geographic area. Moreover, whereas Salzer's corpus reflects the magical practices of a Jewish community, that of the present study is concerned with Christian magical practices. Such differences in the two studies thus precipitate the question: Are Salzer's findings relevant to the present study?

I proceed with the conviction that Salzer's findings apply to the present study, despite the difference in corpuses. Salzer draws heavily from previous scholarship on the magico-religious functions of allusion and analogy to arrive at her model of the *unio magica* and how it opens out the function of allusion for magical practice. Her work

furthers central projects by Meinholf Schumacher on the "historiola" (historiola magic ritually references a situation in which someone has already successfully magically acted),[50] and Jan Assmann on *unio liturgica*.[51] Neither the theoretical work of Schumacher on the historiola nor that of Assmann on *unio liturgica* are confession or corpus dependent, but rather theorize the "magical" potential of particular allusive logics. The corpus of narratives on which I rely is comprised of examples built around such allusive logics, in their earliest forms, associated directly with Solomon. They represent a persistent narrative tradition rather than simply a textual tradition; they document a tradition of religious argumentation rather than a site or sect – a logic of allusion that was considered generally legible and comprehensible.

Because of such foundations, Salzer's work on *unio magica* is especially well suited to ground my study of Christian religious magic, given that part of the foundational work for Salzer's development is based on work, which incorporates analysis of the Catholic mass. For example, in his work on the *Merseburger Zaubersprüche*[52] as historiolas Schumacher incorporates the example of the Catholic mass, citing the work of Bernhard Lang, who writes, "Just as in the modern Catholic

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[50] "Das magische Erzählen kann, aber es muß nicht nach dem Simila-Prinzip geschehen, […]. Geht es beim Analogiezauber um die Ähnlichkeit zwischen dem was jemand tut (oder spricht), und dem, was geschehen soll (also etwa Wasser auf einen Stein gießen soll Regen provozieren usw.), so setz die historiola-Magie an einer Situation an, in der schon einmal jemand erfolgreich magisch gehandelt hat." See: Meinolf Schumacher, "Geschichtenerzählzauber: Die Merseburger Zaubersprüche und die Funktion der Historiola im Magischen Ritual," Ed. Rüdiger Zymner. *Erzählte Welt - Welt des Erzählens: Festschrift für Dietrich Weber* (Köln: Edition Chōra, 2000) 201-15, here 203.

[51] Salzer draws her definition of *unio liturgica* primarily from the work of Schumacher and describes it as "die liturgische Vereinigung mit einem göttlichen Wesen, die durch die Wiedergabe göttlicher Rede geschehe. Die Funktion der *unio liturgica* in der Magie sei die Gleichsetzung des Magiers "mit den zaubernden Göttern oder götterähnlichen Wesen der Vorzeit (Idisen, Wodan) [...] in der Hoffnung, damit eine ähnliche Macht auszuüben, wie es 'einstmals' geschah" (219). In her definition, Salzer herself cites Schumacher (see above), 212f.
See also: Jan Assmann, "Unio Liturgica: Die Kultische Einstimmung in Götterweltlichen Lobpreis als Grundmotiv 'Esoterischer' Überlieferung im Alten Ägypten," *Secrecy and Concealment* (1995): 37-60, especially 46-58, 60.

[52] The *Merseburger Zaubersprüche* or "Merseburg Charms" are ninth/tenth century syncretic Christian-pagan charms preserved in in Old High German.

mass, the priest assumes the role of Christ when he speaks certain words, so the ancients equated themselves with gods when they carried out certain cultic functions."[53] In a parallel move joining two different religious sites, Assmann uses *unio liturgica* in reference to the esoteric literature of ancient Egypt.

Certainly there are differences to be found in what we may call the "magical allusion" (or allusive logic) of late antique and medieval Jews on the one hand, and late antique and medieval Christians on the other, but these scholars share with foundational voices like Malinowski the goal of offering paradigms for assumptions that are shared between "liturgical" and "magical thinking,"[54] acknowledging assumptions shared by individuals that underlie both categories. Thus Salzer's work assumes that magical union through allusion is a potentially universal function of religious thought – a logic that joins ritual practices to power.

To be sure, the present study could never hope to provide an exhaustive examination of various forms of magic or magical thinking within two religions, each with its own multiple faces over time. Instead, I have targeted a recurrent, specific set of moments in which the two religious domains interact to clarify problems that arise when they share a discourse but need to stake out separate positions: here, the problem of the compulsion of demons through conditional access to divine authority.

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[53] The English translation is mine. Lang's German reads: "Wie der Priester in der heutigen katholischen Messe die Rolle Christi einnimmt, wenn er bestimmte Wörter spricht, so setzten sich die Alten oft mit Göttern gleich, wenn sie bestimmte kultische Handlungen ausführten." See: Bernhard Lang, *Heiliges Spiel: Eine Geschichte des Christlichen Gottesdienstes* (München: C.H. Beck, 1998) 315.

[54] In the anthropological sense, as it is intended here, "magical thinking" refers to a fallacious attribution of a causal relationship between action and event. The term sometimes has an unfortunate association with "the primitive" in the social-evolutionary fallacy of colonial anthropology, in which "magical thinking" served as evidence of "the primitive." Here, the intended sense of the term is strictly in reference to the nature of the logic.

Salzer herself has demonstrated that the theoretical framework of her *unio magica* is applicable in both Christian and Jewish contexts by combining Schumacher's work on historiolas with Assmann's concept of *unio liturgica* and applying it to the study of Jewish magic. She provides an important insight into differences between types of allusive union and thereby effectively bridges the conceptual gap, connecting Assmann's *unio liturgica* within the context of liturgy to *unio magica* within the context of efficacious, but not specifically scripted, "magical" acts. She explains:

> The phenomenon of an *unio*, as described by Schumacher, is also found in the Jewish-magical texts of the Cairo Geniza – the conceptual merging of the magician with persons or figures of biblical prehistory. However, a clear difference to the Hekhalot literature is evident in the magical texts which pertains to their liturgical focus: the goal of the magician is not participation in a heavenly liturgy, but rather the completion of a magical act by means of which a particular outcome is to be achieved. It therefore seems advisable to make a terminological distinction in reference to the magical texts and to refer in that case not to an *unio liturgica*, but rather to an *unio magica*.[55]

The same applies (at least in its early development) within the emerging Christian discourse of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages with which I begin this study. This connection was likely also part of the historical reason for which early Christian apologists objected to Solomon, because, in this context, the figure of Solomon was in competition with the figure of Jesus as a figure of power and authority. In one theological reading of the figures, the persistence of a preference for magical union (*unio magica*)

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[55] The English translation is my own. Salzer's German reads: "Auch in den jüdisch-magischen Texten aus der Kairoer Geniza findet sich das Phänomen einer *unio*, wie sie von Schumacher beschrieben wird, einer konzeptioneller Vereinigung des Magiers mit Personen oder Gestalten der biblischen vorzeit also. Allerdings ist in den magischen Texten eine deutlische Differenz zur Hekhalot-Literatur augenscheinlich, die im Hinblick auf deren liturgischen Fokus besteht: Ziel des Magiers ist nicht die Partizipation an einer himlischen Liturgie, sondern die Durchführung einer magischen Handlung, mit der ein bestimmter Zweck erreicht werden soll. Es erscheint daher geraten, eine terminologische Unterscheidung vorzunehmen und bezüglich der magischen Texte nicht von einer *unio liturgica*, sondern vielmehr von einer *unio magica* zu sprechen" (220).

with Solomon in the context of demon compulsion easily was seen to imply that the allusive potential of the figure of Jesus was in some way inferior to that of Solomon – in other words, that Solomon was more powerful. Such a vote of no confidence, had it not been addressed, could have been devastating to the emerging Christian religion, and thus offers at least one potential explanation for the vehemence of the rejection of Solomonic allusion on the part of Christian apologists and theologians. That is, the two figures *both* were implicated in narratives about divine power and authority in an era of theological change, and the idea of magical allusion points up what was at stake in choosing one over the other.

Using *magical allusion* across religious boundaries to illuminate how narrative logics work, then, the first chapter of this study begins by establishing how the Christian discourse of demon compulsion (both magical and theological) actually originated within a Jewish "magical" discourse of the sort that Salzer theorizes, as one religion was growing out of the other and developing its own identity in belief and practice. In understanding this connection, as I have noted above, the idea of purity will figure prominently in my expositions.

In subsequent chapters, this study's focus on Solomonic demon compulsion will extend into the sixteenth century to include examination of how the trope of Solomon's authority over demons recurs in Protestant theology and in what I will suggest as forms of Protestant magic in the conclusion.

Taking that project into the sixteenth century, however, might raise an additional objection to my study's design. On the surface, the historical record suggests that the

popularity and practice of the pseudoepigraphic attribution of magical texts to Solomon declines sharply in the late fifteenth century even as the production of texts of ritual magic appears to have increased. The question thus arises: Are texts that do not claim Solomonic authorship relevant to this study? And by extension: Can magic that does not overtly claim Solomon's authorship still be classified as Solomonic?

The question can be addressed, I believe, by recourse to my explanation that I am addressing a *narrative tradition*, rather than a textual tradition *per se*. To restate this explanation in the more theoretical terms taken up here: I am dealing with one particular discourse of allusion that is preserved in many texts and text types, not one single class of books or genre. The *status* of these texts is from the first multiple. First of all, the magical texts considered in the present study are all pseudepigraphic, from the earliest to the last. None of them were actually written by Solomon. Indeed, scholars do not attribute any extant text – not even canonical texts – in whole or part to the hand of the Hebrew monarch. In this sense, the very question of the status of a text of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion as "authentic" in a tradition which consists entirely of pseudoepigrapha is hopelessly *mal posée*. In this sense, the "text" or textual corpus I consider is the tradition of narratives that *allude* to Solomon's apotropaic power over demons as a particular logic of argument. In order to accomplish such allusion, I will argue, it is not necessary to name Solomon much less attribute a text to his authorship.

A second consideration about textual allusion to Solomon arises here: a question of what we today would call censorship or covert speech. Here, a historical fact also comes into play. The narrative attribution of ritual demon compulsion (i.e. demonic

magic or *nigromantia*) to Solomon did not wane naturally so much as it was vigorously suppressed by theologians. Historically, the late Middle Ages saw an explosion of Solomonic manuals of ritual demon compulsion, and so, as a reaction, numerous Scholastic theological treatises forbade the possession of books of magic – many of them by name. By the sixteenth century, then, ritual texts attributed to Solomon were easily recognizable to both theologian and magician as forbidden, and the consequences for being found in possession of expressly forbidden texts became potentially deadly. The narratives were still understood in traditional terms, but they were revalued culturally

This proscription was not merely a doctrinal argument in words. After the promulgation of the "Witch Bull in" 1484, the consequences of practicing magic during the witch craze were certainly grave enough to cause a magician to consider recording his work in somewhat less obvious ways. Indeed, in manuals of demon compulsion composed during the sixteenth century, we do see a shift in discourse logic away from direct allusion to established authority (or efficacy) of the Hebrew monarch to more veiled references to the recovered or secret authority of ancient Jewish (or Egyptian) traditions: the so-called "*prisca theologia*" (including Kabbalah), which is discussed in chapter three. These later texts alluded not to Solomon, but to an intellectual space that clearly included him without declaring him a sole authority. Allusion to Solomon gives way in ritual texts to allusions to anonymous or "rediscovered" sages with demonstrably similar narratives attached to them as prologues or epistles integrated into the ritual texts.

That censorship played into this shift is easily argued. The sixteenth century texts of ritual magic to which we will return in the conclusions the present study share the

feature of unknown authorship, as do many others in the era. The *Arbatel de Veterum Magicae* (published Basel 1575)[56] is anonymous, and the author of the *Book of Abramelin the Mage* identifies himself as an otherwise unknown fifteenth century Jew from Worms named Abraham.[57]

Yet how can a magical text which does not claim to have been written by Solomon, or indeed, which in fact claims to have been written by someone other than Solomon, be interpreted as alluding to Solomon in such a way that a case can be made to include them in a corpus representing "Solomonic" demon compulsion? At first blush, the anonymity (or at least unfamiliarity) of the authors of these texts would certainly appear to strain the applicability of Salzer's "*unio magica*" to the examination of them in this study. The answer to this question again refers back to my argument for a tradition comprising my corpus rather than a set of genres or book types: while these texts do not allude directly to the apocryphal tradition of Solomon's power over demons, Solomon's reputation as archetypal magician is so well established by the sixteenth century – as will be shown – that it is sufficient to allude to the tradition (i.e. to Solomonic magic and

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[56] See, for example, the recent parallel text modern edition: Joseph H. Peterson, *Arbatel – Concerning the Magic of the Ancients: Original Sourcebook of Angel Magic* (Lake Worth, FL: Ibis Press, 2009).

[57] The date and authorship of this text are contested among scholars. The most conservative is that of Carlos Gilly, who identifies the text as being a Rosicrucian pseudepigraphon dating from 1608: "Die ältesten heute erhaltenen Kopien des 'Wormbser Buchs' mit dem Abfassungsdatum 1608 samt einem Anhang mit der Übersetzung von Jüdischen Gebeten für die Jahre 1608-1609 befinden sich sämtlich in der HAB Wolfenbüttel. Bei dem hier ausgestellten Exemplar handelt es sich um die kodierte Kopie, die Fürst August nicht entziffern konnte (die Zeilen sind in drei Spalten geteilt, jede Spalte um eine Stufe nach unten verschoben, sodass der Text treppenförmig zu lesen ist). Herzog August hat später selber eine Entschlüsselungstabelle für die durch Buchstaben ausgedrückten Zahlen und Begriffe angefertigt und auch einen Teil des Buches eigenhändig ins Reine geschrieben (Cod. Guelf. 13.12 Aug 4°, Cod. Guelf. 13.12 Aug. 4°). Somit steht fest, dass nicht nur die legendären Reisen von Christian Rosenkreuz und Abraham von Worms in die gleiche Zeit (Ende des 14. Jahrhunderts) gesetzt wurden, sondern dass auch beide Reiseberichte um das Jahr 1608 gleichzeitig verfasst worden sind." Carlos Gilly, *Cimelia Rhodostaurotica: Die Rosenkreuzer im Spiegel der Zwischen 1610 und 1660 Entstandenen Handschriften und Drucke: Ausstellung der Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica Amsterdam und der Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel [in] Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, 1995 [und] Amsterdam, Universitätsbibliothek, 1995* (Amsterdam: In de Pelikaan, 1995)18-19.

magicians).[58] Again, these texts share allusion to a particular *narrative* (where I extend Salzer), what I will here designate the *narrative paradigm* of the magical ritual involved, recognizable by its particular prescriptions and assumptions regarding the *formula*, the *rite*, and *the condition of the performer*. As we shall see below, these texts reveal allusion to the Solomonic paradigm itself without naming him specifically; they rely on an understanding shared by their most probable readership that they refer to Solomonic magic, even then they simply invoke only ancient Hebrew tradition. As we shall see in the next chapter, this *narrative paradigm* is also a well-defined *ritual grammar*: the *formula* (demonic/angelic and divine names), the *rite* (demon/spirit compulsion), and the *condition of the performer* ("pure") continue to fit the paradigm or ritual grammar established and cultivated in the long discourse of demon compulsion within Christian theology.

The texts that constitute the examples for this study are, however, not grouped together uncritically. They represent my conscious periodization of the development of the idea of "purity" in the broader discourse of Solomonic demon compulsion within Christianity. Each new period represents an important turn in the discourse – a point at which the narrative trope of Solomon's power over demons and the associated ideas constructs of "purity" are deployed to some new end, or deployed to a familiar end, but within changed parameters. The following chapters are organized to demonstrate major turns in that discourse, major moments in which the Solomonic material becomes

[58] In this sense, I am claiming that the narrative of Solomonic demon compulsion needs to be considered as part of what Michel de Certeau calls "the order of books" in this era: not just a set of books or genres, but also a set of shared, period-specific understandings about how, where, when, and by whom the material in books is to be used authoritatively or normally.

contentious in new and critical ways. Together, they establish the ubiquity of the Solomonic paradigm of demon compulsion up through the sixteenth century with examples from the theological-demonological discourse. These examples reveal the persistence of "purity" as necessary for demon compulsion (both "magical" and "religious") in the same manner in which it was cultivated in the medieval discourse of demon compulsion that was cast unquestionably as "Solomonic," in arguments about ritual purity in particular.

The first period – discussed in the next chapter, the first in this study – includes examples from late antiquity (first century CE through fifth century CE). These examples represent the mobilization of the trope of Solomon's demon compulsion in the anti-Jewish polemics of early Christian apologists. Chapter 2 follows with high and late medieval examples of the Scholastic anti-magical theology of Thomas Aquinas, his immediate predecessors in Paris and his successors. In chapter 3 we trace the process by which the figure of Solomon is obscured in print examples of the narrative paradigm and demonstrate that it nonetheless persists in ways that justify a continued discussion of Solomonic magic in the Renaissance texts and Protestant theology where the figure of Solomon appears to be absent. The final turn in the more abstract discussions of institutional arguments about Solomonic magic comes with the Protestant Reformation and is treated in chapter four, which analyses the developments in the idea of purity as "faith" in the anti-magical theology of Martin Luther.

Let us return now to one of the earlier documented moments in the history of the emergence of Christianity in the west: to early confrontations about the very definition of Solomonic demon compulsion as the core of what would become Solomonic magic.

CHAPTER 1:

THE FIGURE OF SOLOMON IN EARLY CHRISTIAN *CONTRA-IUDAEOS* POLEMICS: PURITY AS ABSENCE-OF-DEFILEMENT

This chapter deals with the first instrumentalization of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons. Beginning in the first century, and continuing into the early Middle Ages,[1] the primary value of narratives of demon compulsion in Christian discourse seems to have been in creating a rhetoric of proof of God's favor. While the complete logic of such proofs is not always demonstrable from individual extant examples, a clear pattern emerges from the investigation of multiple texts. Narratives of

[1] Regarding the use of this logic and its eventual decline, MacMullen writes: "What [the Christians] said now had an authority acknowledged by the emperors themselves; it hardly needed miracles to rest on. There were correspondingly fewer tales of miracles, then, and they circulated most often in remote areas." See: Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire: (a.d. 100-400)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984) 114.

demon compulsion were offered as a sort of litmus test in which a successful attempt at demon compulsion demonstrated both the power of God and the worthiness of the person doing the compelling. However, the rhetorical value of the narrative is not limited to accounts of successful attempts. Narratives of failed attempts were also consistently employed as demonstrations of the inferiority either of the deities or the performers. Moreover, for an audience familiar with this sort of proof logic, such narratives could sometimes be very brief or even incomplete.

Both uses of the narrative will be discussed in this chapter. While both Jewish and Christian examples survive in which the narrative of successful demon compulsion is used to demonstrate the power of God or as proof of God's favor on the performer, the deployment of failed attempt narratives is also of interest to us here because much of the early Christian discourse on the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons focuses on Solomon's inferiority to Jesus. Christian apologists and polemists insisted that demons compelled by Solomon's authority or methods would not obey, and that only by invoking the name of Jesus would the demon be compelled. Early Christian authors even pressed this polemic to argue that the relative ineffectiveness of compelling demons by the authority or methods of Solomon versus that of Jesus could be taken as proof of what appears to have been the central concern of their *Contra-Iudaeos* literature: Jesus and not Solomon was the King of the Jews promised in Old Testament prophecies.

Underlying this polemical difference, however, is a shared logical ground. Purity is the lynchpin in all these narratives (*pro* or *contra*, complete or sketched briefly)

because "impurity" was understood to cause demon compulsion to fail.[2] At the same time, how purity is defined in practice shifts in distinct ways. In the early Christian discourse, for example, the purity we encounter appears to be akin to that which Neusner describes in ancient Judaism as the absence-of-contamination or defilement. One of the earliest examples of ritual texts of Solomonic demon compulsion, found in the Greek Magical Papyri, stipulates "purity" as the *condition of the performer* and specifies the avoidance of pork for the performer to attain that status.[3] Additionally, close examination of an excerpt from the *Antiquities of the Jews* (93/94 CE) by Flavius Josephus (37 CE - 100) reveals his use of a narrative of successful demon compulsion as proof of Solomon's favor with God (i.e. "purity").[4] Yet the earliest Christian references to the apocryphal

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[2] The Christian New Testament offers examples of exorcisms that fail because of some deficiency to the *condition of the performer*. One, we find in Matt 17:14-21, (NASB): When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. ["But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."] Another can be found in Acts 19:11-20: "God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and *began* burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing."

[3] This text cannot be considered "Christian" in the modern doctrinal sense because it predates a defined orthodox tradition.

[4] The logic behind his argument seems to be that if Solomon had lost God's favor through idolatry (impurity), then his method of exorcism would not still be effective. Since, however, Josephus witnessed successful exorcisms performed according to Solomon's methods, Solomon must not have lost God's favor. This reading would appear to be confirmed by early Christian *contra-iudaeos* polemics, which are couched within the same logical frame, but, which argue to the contrary, that Solomon did indeed lose the favor of God and therefore his exorcistic authority cannot still be valid. This logic is examined throughout the chapter.

Solomon narrative – those found in the anti-Jewish polemics of the early Christian apologists – seem to blur the lines between what Malinowski has separated into *condition of the performer* and *formula*. Origen, for example, objects to the use of Solomon's formulas for compelling demons, insisting that demons should instead be compelled in the name of Jesus. This we will reveal to be a sort of doctrinal purity (rather than ritual purity), possible only within monotheism akin to what Neusner has identified in ancient Judaism. In the late antique Christian discourses of demon compulsion, it is the figure of Solomon that becomes a source of doctrinal impurity.

By the beginning of the Middle Ages, the deployment of the apocryphal Solomon narrative by Christian apologists against the Jewish interpretation of prophecy seems to reflect a rhetorical change of strategy. Two important pieces of such apologia, the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* (sixth century) and the *Testament of Solomon* (fourth century), with which we will conclude this chapter, argue not for the superiority of Jesus, but for the inferiority of Solomon. As a result, for the first time in Christian discourse, we see Christian apologists adduce and even elaborate upon the canonical account of Solomon's idolatry from 1 Kings 11 in an effort to establish that Solomon could not be the intended subject of contested Old Testament prophecies. Solomon's demon compulsion must fail because he lost the favor of God through his idolatry (impurity) – theologically, that argument had to be portrayed as resolved. Moreover, as we will discuss in the following chapter, this same Christian focus on Solomon's impurity becomes the basis of Aquinas' theory of magic as an explicit or implicit demonic pact – a

theory that justifies his prohibition of all magic and allows him to distinguish fundamentally magic from exorcism.[5]

Returning, however, to the present discussion, the texts and fragments with which we are concerned represent many different voices taken from more than one conversation and thus resist attempts to organize them for presentation. Some sources – those that are presumably Jewish or syncretic Jewish-pagan – assume or seek to demonstrate Solomon's favor with God (i.e. "purity" in the more-or-less Levitical sense of absence-of - contamination), while others – presumably Christian texts – seek to demonstrate Solomon's idolatry ("impurity") and thus his inferiority to Jesus. Reconstruction of the discourse is further complicated by the spotty availability of extant sources as well as the different types of texts in which the narrative appears: some texts consist only of narrative and suggest no ritual use while others were obviously intended for ritual purposes.

Yet regardless of whether the authors of the examples in this chapter sought to prove or disprove Solomon's favor with God, whether their intentions were practical or polemical, they all did so with a related concept of "purity" for what Malinowski has called the *condition of the performer*. That concept of purity – though already somewhat spiritualized and metaphoricized compared to the earliest Jewish examples – was based on the idea of *fidelity* to one god (i.e. monotheism or, framed another way, the absence of the defilement of idolatry) and represents the first of three that will be explored in this project.

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[5] This differentiation, which first becomes reflected first in the institutional church, later extends into the social sciences.

This chapter could be meaningfully organized in a number of ways, but because the main purpose of the larger project is to track what Mary Douglas has hypothesized as the spiritualization and metaphoricization of purity, we will present the material chronologically, and use this organization to position the individual voices within an underlying discourse that has essentially disappeared from view today.

The Cultic Value of Demon Compulsion: The Many Narratives of Solomon

While the apocryphal narratives of Solomon's power over demons consistently include or imply issues of power and purity, there is no indication of the extant versions of the narrative having originated from a single, discernable Urtext. Moreover, no version of the narrative ever achieved the sort of canonical status that would have helped to protect it from change as it was retold and rerecorded from text to text. In consequence, the narrative's details changed over time, as it could be – and was – deployed for different ends by various people over a long period of time.

Most notably, details shift between various versions of the narrative regarding the means by which Solomon was able to compel demons. The *rite* (in the Malinowskian sense) appears to be the most changeable. For example, the ring (Solomon's ring) which in many accounts is crucial to the *rite* and is, in fact, inscribed with part the *formula* (i.e. the name of God) is wholly absent in other versions of the narrative. By comparison, the *formula* seems much more stable, usually involving the power of names – the name or names of God, and sometimes also the secret names of the demons (or angels) to be

compelled (particularly when the name of God is inscribed on the ring).[6] The most consistent of the aspects of magic in Malinowski's three-part division, however, is the *condition of the performer*. Even in the most fragmented examples, it is clear Solomon's power over demons was a spiritual gift from God – borrowed power that was given to him as a reward for his fidelity (prior to his losing God's favor through idol worship).

Powerful efficacious names and demon compulsion were not unique to the Jews. In fact it is quite possible that the idea came into ancient Judaism as a result of contact with neighboring cultures in the Hellenistic world. The many examples of similar rituals found in the *Greek Magical Papyri* that do not mention Solomon or even the Hebrew God attest to this fact. Yet the Jewish analogue did have at least one feature that set it apart: monotheism.

In the early context of what we are calling "Solomonic" demon compulsion, the ancient Jews of the Hellenized Eastern Mediterranean recognized a relationship of expectation to authorization between their singular god and themselves. This belief supported the mandate of the First Commandment[7] and functioned to keep the Hebrews from falling into idolatry – polytheism or paganism. The belief was that their one true god expected his people to keep his covenant, and that in return he would reliably protect them by authorizing the use of his divine power over his creation, including demons. The

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[6] I suspect that when the name of God is already present on the ring, for example, the names of the demons take on additional significance as part of the *formula* (i.e. as secret knowledge) in much the way that Malinowski describes. However, when the name of God is not already present in such a way – when the name(s) of God must be revealed as secret knowledge in the text –, then the names of the demons seem to be of less importance.

[7] See Exodus 20:3-6, (NASB): "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

Jews knew theirs was the most powerful god because, according to their sacred narratives, those among them who were able to invoke him had worked greater wonders than foreigners who invoked foreign gods.

Belief in the veracity of that narrative had important cosmological and religious implications. First, it guaranteed the very possibility of demon compulsion. Regardless of the claims of surrounding cults, the power of the God of Israel was sufficient to subdue any supernatural threat, and that power was accessible, not only through petitions and sacrifices, but through invocation. At least that much of the narrative was accepted in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Indeed, the belief that God could grant power over demons to his people is a necessary prerequisite to the idea and practice of exorcism in all three religions. Second, and closely related to the first implication, it meant that demon compulsion – however exceptional it might be – fell within the domain of religious practice. Tradition, both apocryphal and canonical, held that God had granted certain individuals access to his own divine power for the necessary purpose of protecting and defending his people from both worldly and supernatural evil.[8] Thus, the act of demon compulsion in itself could not be seen as inherently sinful (impure), although invoking foreign gods for similar purposes (i.e. idolatry) was regarded as the greatest source of

[8] There are many examples in both canonical and apocryphal literature as well as theological arguments, which reflect this model of demon compulsion by conditional investiture with divine authority. See, for example, surahs 21:81-82, 27:38-40, and 34:12-14 of the Quran, previously cited in a footnote on page 21. These concern Solomon's authority over the jinn (i.e. "demons"). See also Thomas Aquinas' *De Potentia Dei* (Q 6, A 10): "We conclude then that the demons which give success to the magic art may be both compelled and enticed. They are compelled by a higher being: sometimes by God himself, —sometimes through the divine power by holy angels and men. Thus the demons are said to be curbed by the angelic order of Powers. Holy men, even as they participate in the gift of the Virtues inasmuch as they work miracles, so do they share in the gift of the Powers inasmuch as they cast out devils. Sometimes too they are compelled by superior demons; and this compulsion alone can be effected by means of magic."

defilement (impurity).[9] Finally, it meant that the power was ultimate. Insofar as the late antique Hebrews believed that the Jewish god was all-powerful, it meant that there was no greater, surer means for humans to compel spirits than with the power of the God of Israel. In short, given the belief in the narrative of their god's authorization of human agents with his divine power, there was no reason for the ancient Hebrews to turn to any other powers for protection. An important effect of this belief, as it became part of a shared discourse, is that demon compulsion played a significant role in the gaining of converts especially from Judaism in early Christianity.

The logic of expectation and authorization that plays out in the narrative of Solomon's demon compulsion was well suited to the largely polytheistic world in which the ancient Jews lived. It is not hard to see the potential for cultic pragmatism in the cultivation of a narrative that offered divine protection from the gods and demons of neighboring pagans (or the threats and curses of their priests and sorcerers) in exchange for religious fidelity-as-purity. In the case of the Hebrews, however, religious fidelity also meant cultic purity – the Jewish Covenant with their god.[10] It carried the obligation of physical, outward signs that not only served to preserve cultic practices and narratives

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[9] Again, Neusner writes, "First, impurity is seen as a sign of rejection of God or by God. […] Closely related to the use of purity as an indication of divine acceptance, second, is the very frequent allusion to idolatry as unclean. Just as impurity signifies the rejection of God, so the greatest rejection of all, represented by idolatry, will be understood as a principle source of impurity. Foreign gods defile, so Gen 35:2" (13f.).

[10] See, especially Ezekiel 20:1-32. For example: "I said to them, 'Cast away, each of you, the detestable things of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.' But they rebelled against Me and were not willing to listen to Me; they did not cast away the detestable things of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. Then I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I acted for the sake of My name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they *lived*, in whose sight I made Myself known to them by bringing them out of the land of Egypt. So I took them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. I gave them My statutes and informed them of My ordinances, by which, if a man observes them, he will live. Also I gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them" (v. 7-12).

from syncretic blending, but also to police the social interactions of Jews and non-Jews. This purity as the absence of defilement entailed adherence to social norms that were curated by priests – religious authorities. God authorized the pure, but the priests who controlled access to the Temple determined purity.[11]

As we have mentioned, that same relationship of expectation to authorization that was at work in the dynamics of ancient Jewish religious life provided the followers of Christianity with a logical frame in which to be convinced (and in turn, to convince others) that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. If Jesus was able to work greater miracles, then, according to this logic of divine authorization, his must be the more powerful god. Since, however, Jesus did not invoke a foreign god, but rather claimed to be the son of the God of Israel, then – by the same logic – that claim must be true. The dynamics of this logic are apparent in the one-upmanship of many of the miracles attributed to Jesus in New Testament Gospels and Apocrypha when juxtaposed with Old Testament parallels. Moses provided bread (manna) in the desert – Jesus provided bread *and* fish. Moses parted the sea – Jesus walked across it. This was the context of Christian interest in the apocryphal Solomon narrative. Solomon was known to have cast out demons, so Jesus drove out legions.[12] While we do not find direct comparison of the exorcistic capabilities of Solomon an Jesus in the Gospels, we do see them explicitly compared in Matthew 12:42: "The queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment

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[11] Neusner, for example, writes, " An inductive inquiry into the uses of the words unclean and clean in biblical literature will show that they occur chiefly with reference to cultic acts. If you are impure, you cannot enter the Temple or participate in certain cultic acts. If you are pure you may do so" (2).

[12] See Mark 5:1-20 and Luke 8:26-39.

and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."[13]

Yet Christianity's relationship with the narrative of Solomon's demon compulsion was ambivalent. Early apologists – as we will see – gladly employed its logic, but emergent Christian theology had an uncertain and ambivalent relationship with the physical purity requirements of Levitical Law.[14] All who believed were authorized, and, consequently stories of early Christianity are filled with the humiliations and expulsions of demons. For the late antique Christian, the price of access to its supernatural power was comparatively low without the many purity requirements of Levitical law, and Christianity spread quickly.[15] However, the Christian narrative itself placed the apologists in a double bind. In order for Jesus to be the fulfillment of Jewish prophecies, the prophecies and the prophets must be valid. The rhetoric of "One greater than Solomon" is only effective if the object of comparison is also great, which meant that this narrative of Solomon was preserved even in Christianity.

Roots and Traces of the Apocryphal Solomon Narrative

Despite the prevalence of the apocryphal Solomon narrative and the significance of its deployment in early Jewish-Christian polemics, its origins, as we have said, remain

[13] Matthew 12:42, (NASB).

[14] For a recent study on purity discourses in early Christianity, see: Moshe Blidstein, *Purity, Community, and Ritual in Early Christian Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[15] MacMullen, especially 32-42.

obscure.[16] Parts of the narrative are shared among all three Abrahamic religions. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have all cultivated biographies of Solomon as the builder of the First Jerusalem Temple in a combination of canonical and apocryphal texts – some referencing his power over demons, and some not. In the section that follows, we present two narrative Jewish texts. The texts are scriptural, not ritual, and they do not suggest any polemical readings. At the time when they were written, they represented what was probably a Jewish author speaking to a Jewish reader. The first, from the *Book of Kings*, is canonical in Judaism as well as Catholic and Protestant Christianity. The second is considered deuterocanonical (secondary canon) in Catholic tradition,[17] but apocryphal in Protestant tradition and no longer considered canonical in Judaism.

This early description of Solomon's unrivaled wisdom from the *Book of Kings* (ca. 550 BCE) may be earliest hint of the narrative:

> And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and largeness of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ez'rahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the nations round about. He also uttered three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall; he spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of

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[16] Torijano has the following to say regarding the emergence of the apocryphal narrative: "[I]n contrast to the way he is represented in biblical literature, his reputation for wisdom is only secondary in the pseudepigrapha, except for *Wisdom of Solomon*. After a relative period of oblivion in the first two centuries CE, Solomon became the exorcist, the magician *par excellence*, acquiring extreme popularity in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages." See: Pablo A. Torijano, *Solomon, the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 2.

[17] The term deuterocanonical means "secondary canon." The Catholic deuterocanonical scriptural texts are: Tobit, Judith, Additions to Esther (Vulgate Esther 10:4–16:24), Wisdom (also called the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach (also called Ecclesiasticus), Baruch, including the Letter of Jeremiah (Additions to Jeremiah in the Septuagint); and include additions to Daniel: Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Holy Children (Vulgate Daniel 3:24–90), Susanna (Vulgate Daniel 13, Septuagint prologue), Bel and the Dragon (Vulgate Daniel 14, Septuagint epilogue); and Maccabees 1 and 2.

> fish. And men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.[18]

Scholars have suggested that the idea that Solomon's wisdom included magical knowledge – an idea so evident in later texts, as we will see – may already have been implicit in the above claim that "Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east, all the wisdom of Egypt."[19] The reason for this is that inherent to such a claim is a comparison not only to Pharaoh's magicians[20] but also to the legendary Egyptian sage and magus, Hermes Trismegistus.[21]

Yet regardless of the extent to which such a reading had been previously implicit, by the first century CE, the claim had become explicit in the *Book of the Wisdom of Solomon*. This passage – obviously parallel to the above passage from *Kings* – appears to take the form of an aretology[22] and has certainly become more overtly magical. Here (7:15-22), it is Solomon who speaks:

> May God grant me to speak with judgement, and to have thoughts worthy of what I have received; for he is the guide even of wisdom and the corrector of the wise. For both we and our words are in his hand, as are all understanding and skill in crafts. For it is he who gave me unerring knowledge of what exists, to know the structure of the world and the activity of the elements; the beginning and end and middle of times, the alternations of the solstices and the changes of the seasons, the cycles of the year and the constellations of the stars, the natures of animals

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[18] 1 Kings 4:29-34, (Revised Standard Version).

[19] See: Georg Salzberger, *Die Salomo-sage in der Semitischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Vergleichenden Sagenkunde* (Berlin, 1907) 92, who writes, "Sollte Sal. weiser sein denn alle Menschen, weiser selbst als die zauberkundigen Ägypter, so musste er kennen und beherrschen, die, von Gott verdammt und aus dem Himmel verstossen, die unausrottbaren Feinde der Erdengeschöpfe sind."

[20] Exodus 7:11, 7:22, 8:7, etc.

[21] Hermes Trismegistus (Ancient Greek: Ἑρμῆς ὁ Τρισμέγιστος, "thrice-greatest Hermes"; Latin: *Mercurius ter Maximus*) was thought to have been the author of the *Hermetic Corpus*, the body of texts, which form the basis of Hermeticism.

[22] An aretology (from ancient Greek ἀρετή/*aretá*, meaning goodness, virtue, or excellence of any kind and also "marvelous deed") refers, in the strictest sense, to a narrative about a divine figure's miraculous deeds. In the Greco-Roman world, aretologies represent a religious branch of rhetoric and are a prose development of the hymn as praise poetry. See: Collins, Adela Yarbro, "Aretalogy", in: *Religion Past and Present*.

> and the tempers of wild animals, the powers of spirits and the thoughts of human beings, the varieties of plants and the virtues of roots; I learned both what is secret and what is manifest, for wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me.[23]

The difference in the two descriptions of Solomon is striking. In his book, *Solomon the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (2002), Pablo Torijano points to both the magnification (and magicization) of Solomon's gifts as well as the turn to the first person perspective that is consistent with other aretologies known to the ancient world.[24] The author of *Wisdom* not only presents Solomon as a magus himself, but also presents God as patron and teacher of the magical arts. Moreover, we note that because this later Jewish work is considered deuterocanonical in Catholic tradition, it would have informed the writings of both early Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* literature and medieval anti-magic theology.

The Rhetoric of *Ex Post Facto* Proofs

By the first century CE, the idea that Solomon's great wisdom included knowledge of occult forces had been made explicit, as we have seen in the above quote from the *Book of Wisdom*. However, at the same time, we find the earliest narratives of Solomon demonstrating a specific power to compel and constrain demons. The *Testament of Truth*, (IX, 3 in the Nag Hammadi Codex 2nd-3rd century CE),[25] for example, which

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[23] Wisdom 7:15-22 (Revised Standard Version).

[24] Lester L. Grabbe, (*Wisdom of Solomon*. London: T & T Clark International, 2003) 92.

[25] See: Robinson James, *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2007) 458. "They are wicked in their behavior! Some of them fall away to the worship of idols. Others have demons dwelling with them, as did David the king. He is the one who laid the foundation of Jerusalem; and his son Solomon, whom he begat in adultery, is the one who built Jerusalem by means of the demons, because he received power. When he had finished building, he imprisoned the demons in the temple. He placed them into seven waterpots. They remained a long time in the waterpots, abandoned there. When the Romans went up to Jerusalem, they discovered the waterpots, and

was recovered as part of the Nag Hammadi Library, includes a story of Solomon putting demons to work in the construction of Jerusalem before sealing them in waterpots and burying them beneath the Temple where they remained until the Romans released them into the world.[26] Additionally, near the end of the first century we find the earliest account of a tradition of demon compulsion according to methods attributed to Solomon in Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*.

In the section that follows, I will first establish how the narrative works with Josephus, then I present examples of how that tradition of attributing to Solomon the power to compel demons was expounded and mobilized in early Christian *apologiae* and *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics, as well as how the idea of purity grows in importance as a means of discrediting Solomon vis-à-vis Jesus as a demon compelling authority. This discourse frequently took the form of a debate over the relative efficacy of various methods of "exorcism," which, at the time, was simply understood as demon compulsion and not distinct from "magic," as it would later become.[27] At its beginnings in late antiquity, the discourse on Solomonic demon compulsion is still consistent with

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immediately the demons ran out of the waterpots, as those who escape from prison. And the waterpots remained pure thereafter. And since those days, they dwell with men who are in ignorance, and they have remained upon the earth. Who, then, is David? And who is Solomon? And what is the foundation? And what is the wall which surrounds Jerusalem? And who are the demons? And what are the waterpots? And who are the Romans? But these are mysteries …"

[26] Compare to the accounts of Solomon's having forced demons into building the Temple as in the *Testament of Solomon* discussed below.

[27] The Gospel of Matthew provides us with a helpful linguistic comparison for understanding the relative *lack* of difference between the concepts of compulsion, adjuration, and even exorcism in the ancient world. We read in Matthew 26:63: "The high priest stood up and said to Him, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to Him, "I *adjure* You by the living God, that You tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." The Latin vulgate (26:63) of the same passage we read: "*Et dixit ei princeps sacerdotum: Adjuro te per Deum vivum, ut dicas nobis si tu es Christus Filius Dei. Et dixit ei Jesus: Tu sixisti*." What is translated as "I adjure" in the English and Latin is given in the original Greek as: Ἐξορκίζω (Exorkizō). Thus, we may understand that the sort of compulsion (or adjuration, or exorcism) "by the living God" that the high priest attempts to press on Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew is conceptually the same as the ancient exorcist/magician, who likewise commands demons through the invocation of divine names.

Malinowski's observation regarding formula in which he remarks, "To the direct question of the subject, the natives always reply that the spell is the more important part."[28] (See below the example from the *Greek Magical Papyri* promises "a first rate name.") This, however, will change by the Middle Ages with the rise of a clerical class and the establishment of an institutional and hierarchical church. At that point, in a literate religion, the *formula* is too knowable, and so control becomes maintained by policing the *condition of the performer* said to be required for such compulsion.

Extant papyri, amulets, and charms bear witness to the fact that, in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean world, it was common practice to invoke whatever gods whose aid might be appropriate to a particular situation – gods of war, gods of love, gods of harvest, childbirth, and so on. Ancient pagan magicians, it seems, subscribed to a philosophy of strength in numbers where divine aid was concerned. Moreover, prior knowledge or affiliation with the owner of the name appears not to have been necessarily required. In fact, one charm from the Greek Magical Papyri promises efficacy insured by "a first rate name," suggesting that the transcriber of that charm anticipated its being used with little or no knowledge of the deity attached to it.[29] In the respective monotheistic cases of Christianity and Judaism, however, that philosophy had to be modified, even if it could not be done away with entirely. Thus, rather than invoking as many gods as possible, the Jewish exorcist-magician invoked the one god by as many of his epithets and cognomens as possible, as well as, apparently, in association with great personages:

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[28] Malinowski 418.

[29] At least according to the translator, see: Hans D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) 163.

the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, etc.[30] The effect would have found resonance both with impressively lengthy titulature of ancient kings and pharaohs, and the ancient Greek aretologies, already mentioned.

Both Jewish and Christian demon compellers were, however, obviously at odds with their pagan counterparts in respect to this aspect of their magical practice. Where a pagan would not necessarily see anything wrong with invoking the aid of both Helios and Isis together, the Jewish magician could not approach demon compulsion so blithely: "You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me" (Exodus 20:5). After all, the invocation of a deity, insofar as it is a call for aid, is also a vote of confidence – an expression of belief that the deity invoked can and will intercede. Thus, the god one invokes first is the god one trusts the most. A Jewish exorcist-magician who risked invoking multiple gods not only forced

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[30] See Origen's *Contra Celsum* (4.33): "[...] Celsus, assailing the contents of the first book of Moses, which is entitled Genesis, asserts that the Jews accordingly endeavoured to derive their origin from the first race of jugglers and deceivers, appealing to the testimony of dark and ambiguous words, whose meaning was veiled in obscurity, and which they misinterpreted to the unlearned and ignorant, and that, too, when such a point had never been called in question during the long preceding period. Now Celsus appears to me in these words to have expressed very obscurely the meaning which he intended to convey. It is probable, indeed, that his obscurity on this subject is intentional, inasmuch as he saw the strength of the argument which establishes the descent of the Jews from their ancestors; while again, on the other hand, he wished not to appear ignorant that the question regarding the Jews and their descent was one that could not be lightly disposed of. It is certain, however, that the Jews trace their genealogy back to the three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the names of these individuals possess such efficacy, when united with the name of God, that not only do those belonging to the nation employ in their prayers to God, and in the exorcising of demons, the words, God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, but so also do almost all those who occupy themselves with incantations and magical rites. For there is found in treatises on magic in many countries such an invocation of God, and assumption of the divine name, as implies a familiar use of it by these men in their dealings with demons. These facts, then— adduced by Jews and Christians to prove the sacred character of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of the Jewish race— appear to me not to have been altogether unknown to Celsus, but not to have been distinctly set forth by him, because he was unable to answer the argument which might be founded on them." See: *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 4, edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885); revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/04164.htm>.

YHWH to share the stage – for exorcisms were quite public and performative[31] – but by implication, suggested that the God of Israel may not be up to the task on his own. Likewise, the Christian exorcist-magician understood that what was true before the Incarnation was equally valid afterwards: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; etc.," (Mark 16:16-17). Like Father, like Son. Thus, the development of fidelity-as-purity (i.e. absence-of-defilement through idolatry) as a component of the relationship of expectation to authorization may have been partially responsible for the initial success of monotheism, perhaps one encouraged by the temple priests.

What is noteworthy about both of these examples is that the same power that is invoked for aid demands something very particular in return. In both the Jewish and Christian paradigms, the conditional investiture with divine power is strictly covenantal, not contractual – an ongoing relationship, not a limited transaction. Access to power thus demanded not just sacrifice (as in the familiar *do ut des*, or "I give that you might give" magical logic of antiquity)[32] but also loyalty to a relationship. In addition to whatever physical forms of purity had to be observed as part of the covenant, fealty was built into the narrative to which the exorcist-magician alluded as the paradigmatic source of power (as Salzer explains in *Magie der Anspielung*). Solomon's power was a reward for his fidelity to the one god of Israel, thus magical union (*unio magica*) with the figure of

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[31] See MacMullen 27f.

[32] See, for example, Georg Luck's discussion of the term in *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006 [1985]) 479.

Solomon required the same. There is no reason to suspect that, absent the paradigmatic narratives, monotheism of either the Jewish or Christian variety (and, with it, the possibility of idolatry as defilement) would have appealed to any ancient magician or exorcist, given its restriction to a single god rather than to multiple gods tailored for specific purposes. Monotheism and the possibility of idolatry-as-impurity developed together, as numerous Jewish-pagan syncretic examples of papyri and other charms attest with their otherwise forgotten examples of invocations of the Hebrew god alongside the god of Egypt.[33]

Yet the implications of demon compulsion were not limited to the religious experience of the individual compeller and his (or possibly her) relationship with the divine. The early Christian apologists concerns over demon compulsion become altogether comprehensible when we shift perspectives from those of the exorcist and demoniac (in anthropological terms, "the magician and the client") to that of a crowd of witnesses. While the invocation of a deity certainly may be seen as a vote of confidence on the part of the invoker (especially if he can only invoke one deity), it was also an opportunity for the invoker to stage a demonstration of a favored deity's power for an audience of eager onlookers. Likewise as we have already mentioned, the same scenario also provided an opportunity for demonstrating the inferiority of a deity (or invoker) with

[33] On the development of monotheism and the differences between Jewish and Christian (and Muslim) monotheisms, see: Jan Assmann and Robert Savage, *The Price of Monotheism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010). Assmann writes, "Christianity and Islam [...] have lashed out in violence again and again throughout history. Whereas the Jewish people's belief in its own election requires that it exclude itself, the Christian obligation to evangelize and the Muslim obligation to compel submission require that they both exclude the Other. In choosing Israel to be his people, god marks it out from all other peoples and forbids it to adopt the customs of the environment. By commanding Christians and Muslims to spread the truth to all four corners of the earth, god ensures that those who close their minds to this truth will be shut out. Only in this form does monotheism's inherent potential for exclusion explode into violence" (18).

a failed exorcism narrative. Early Christian apologists understood the rhetorical value of both scenarios, and, consequently, we find a demonstrably strong interest in demon compulsion in their *apologiae*.

In his book, *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, Ramsay MacMullen explains that public exorcisms seem to have been a significant – if not the primary – means of winning new converts in late antique Christianity:

> In a host of passages, it is explained by Tertullian or Origen that daimons, not gods, had produced all the miracles, oracles, epiphanies, signs, and even benefactions of any sort that constituted the whole divine history of the non-Christian world since time began. So a campaign of demotion was under way.[34]
>
> The logic offered to account for the conversions he produced – that he or the divinity he invoked was of greater authority than the daimons, and that that power could both greatly help and greatly hurt one – fit altogether naturally with the logic described earlier (above, pp. 26ff.). No alternative equally natural suggests itself, and none is attested.[35]

From the apologist's perspective, then, a well-attended, successful exorcism was an opportunity not to be squandered on an obscure or ambiguous divine name. The names and epithets invoked were not only intended for the purpose of intimidating the demon, but also to burnish the reputation of the deity involved and spread that deity's fame.

Here, too, a clear differentiation between Jewish and Christian practices may have arisen. The Jewish exorcist had at his disposal multiple epithets for his one god. If carefully managed, these could be presented in such a way as to instruct the onlookers while simultaneously intimidating the demon. In part of a somewhat syncretized exorcistic charm from The *Greek Magical Papyri* (*PGM* IV. 3007-86), known as "A

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[34] MacMullen 18.
[35] MacMullen 61.

tested charm of Pibechis for those possessed by daimons,"[36] we can clearly see the homiletic side of demon compulsion:

> […] because I conjure you by god, light-bearing, unconquerable, who knows what is in the heart of every living being, the one who formed of dust the race of humans,[37] the one who, after bringing them out from obscurity, packs together the clouds, waters the earth with rain and blesses its fruit, [the one] whom every heavenly power of angels and archangels praises. I conjure you by the great god SABAŌTH, through whom the Jordan River drew back,[38] and the Red Sea which Israel crossed, became impassable,[39] because I conjure you by the one who introduced the one hundred and forty languages and distributed them by his own command.[40] I conjure you by the one who burned up the stubborn giants with lightning,[41] whom the heaven of heavens praises, whom the wings of cherubim praise. I conjure you by the one who put the mountains around the sea [or] a wall of sand and commanded the sea not to overflow.[42] The abyss obeyed;[43] and you obey, every daimonic spirit, because I conjure you by the one who causes the four winds to move[44] together from the holy aions, [the] skylike, sealike, cloudlike, light-bringing, unconquerable [one]. I conjure you by the one in holy Jerusalem,[45] before whom the unquenchable fire burns for all time,[46] with this holy name IAEŌBAPHRENEMOUN (formula), the one before whom the fiery Gehenna trembles, flames surround, iron bursts asunder and every mountain is afraid from its foundation. I conjure you, every daimonic spirit, by the one who oversees the earth and makes its foundations tremble,[47] [the one] who made all things which are not into that which is.

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[36] Hans D. Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986) 96f.

[37] Gn 2:7.

[38] Jos 3:13-14; Ps 113:3.

[39] Ex 14:27

[40] Most Jewish sources speak of seventy nations and seventy languages in the world. But there are authorities, who name 140 languages. For discussion and references, see Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* I, 173, 214; V 194-95.

[41] Gn 6:4; 19:24-29.

[42] Jb 38:10-11; Jer 5:22.

[43] Prv 8:26-29; Jb 38:30, 34.

[44] Ps 134:7; also Gn 8:1; Nm 11:31, Jb 28:25, etc.

[45] The name is given as Hierosolymon. For the various forms of the city's name, see G. Fohrer and E. Lohse, *TDNT 7* (1971), s.v. Σιων κτλ., sections A. I. 2; B. I (esp. nn. 133, 134); C. I. 2.

[46] This refers to the seven-branched candelabrum (menorah) of the Jerusalem Temple. Its undying light was legendary in antiquity. See *PGM* IV. 1219 and n.; Ps.-Hecataeus, in Iosephus, *c. Ap*. 1. 199; and LXX Ex 27:20; Lv 6:12-13; Diodorus Sic. 34. 1. 4 (also in Stern, *Greek and Latin authors on Jews and Judaism* I [Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1976], p. 180 (#63). For additional references, see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People* II (1979) 297 and n. 18.

[47] Ps 103:32.

The cumulative effect falls somewhere between a *curriculum vitae* and a sermon. It is hard to imagine that early Jewish and even pagan exorcists weren't aware of the prosthelytic potential of litanies of invocations of "the god who…" prior to the efforts of the third century Christian apologist Origen, who discusses the matter directly in his *Contra Celsum*.

Compared to the Jewish apologist-exorcist, his Christian counterpart was at somewhat of a disadvantage. As an exorcist, the Christian was free to invoke the God of Israel, and – as will be discussed below in a section on Origen – apparently did. After all, the Christian Gospels record Jesus himself appealing in prayer to God as his father, and we are told that Jesus said, "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30). However, as an apologist, the Christian who failed to emphasize the divinity of Jesus by compelling demons in his name risked appearing indistinguishable from his Jewish counterpart in the performance (or account) of the exorcism – his first and best chance of winning new converts from paganism. Worse still, were he to find himself performing an exorcism before a crowd of potential converts from Judaism, the invocation of Jesus might appear no more than optional if the ritual were not markedly different from Jewish version. In other words, from his own perspective, the Christian exorcist *could* invoke the god of Israel or Jesus, or both, but the prosthelytic value (whether performative or rhetorical) of such an act would be counterproductive faced with a Jewish audience.

The volume of late antique *Contra-Iudaeos* literature by Christian apologists does assure us that converting Jews (or at least *keeping them converted*) was of great concern. After all, Christianity presented itself as the realization of the promise of Jewish

prophecy. The Jews' conversion or refusal to convert was tantamount to their acceptance or rejection of the early Christian sect's central claim that Jesus was the Messiah – the fulfillment of Jewish prophecies. Because of the particular relationship of Christianity to Judaism – as contested fulfillment of its prophecies – the usual prosthelytic logic of exorcisms seems to have fallen flat with Jews. Simply put, Christians could not argue the inferiority of one deity to another without undermining their own position because the Christians claimed their deity was the son of the god of the Jews. We even find examples of early Christian apologists defending the superiority of the god of Israel with the *ex post facto* demon-compulsion-as-proof argument. For example, in his *Contra Celsum*, Origen argues at length the point that demons compelled in the name of the God of Jacob, the God of Isaac, and the God of Abraham must obey both Jews *and* Christians. He even boasts that pagans have worked wonders with these names in support of the superiority of his god.[48] In *Contra Celsum*, however, Origen was arguing with a pagan (Celsus) who recognized little if any distinction between Christians and Jews. Origen's *ex post facto* demon compulsion argument defended both Jews and Christians, but did not distinguish them let alone produce a case for the inferiority of the Jewish belief. Thus, a different polemical strategy was ultimately necessary for Christians.

At this point, we find a distinct change in the narrative used by Christians to create a new reference point for demon compulsion in ways that were comprehensible to Jewish audiences, but which stressed a new beginning. The Jewish tradition of Solomonic exorcism provided the opportunity for a straw man. Christian apologists argued the

[48] Refer to note on p. 60.

inferiority of Solomon as YHWH's chosen, rather than of YHWH himself. Naturally, then, Christian apologists argued for the superiority of exorcisms that invoked the name of Jesus over those that invoked the authority of Solomon or were allegedly composed by him. In two examples potentially four centuries apart, Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* (second cent.) and the anonymous *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* (sixth cent.), the apologists framed their accounts as dialogues between Christians and Jews. However, in both cases scholars suspect that voice of the Jew is overwhelmingly or even entirely a rhetorical construct and that the dialogues probably do not represent record of historic disputations.[49]

To be sure, when Origen addresses a Christian audience, he expresses concern about the use of "adjurations composed by Solomon," but his comments are made in the context of a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, and could thus hardly be interpreted as part of an open debate between Christians and Jews – this was not a text directly aimed at conversions, as public demon compulsion could have been.[50]

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[49] We find the same logic applied in Acts 19:13-20: "But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, 'I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. And the evil spirit answered and said to them, 'I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing."

[50] MacMullen writes, "Writings originally directed or later offered from within the church to an audience beyond did not include, of course, any pages that are now canonical or, for that matter apocryphal; for those pages were rather for internal consumption. At best, the occasional outsider who investigated them was an enemy, like Celsus or Porphyry. That leaves nothing but Apologetic literature for a wider readership. On the basis of a statement by Tertullian and on general probability, however, the experts today are generally agreed that the literature likewise served chiefly for internal consumption" (20).

Despite the lack of evidence in extant Christian texts that real Jewish interlocutors engaged with Christians in "dialogues" like those named above, which included discussion of the relative merits of exorcisms composed by Solomon and those performed in the name of Jesus, the rhetorical potential of Solomon's exorcistic authority appears not to have been an entirely one-sided polemical exercise. Predating the earliest example in the Christian apologia – and roughly contemporaneous with the writing of the Christian gospels –, Jewish historian Flavius Josephus devotes his attentions to Solomon's ability to compel demons in an episode in his *Antiquities* (ca. 93 CE). While Josephus does not explicitly draw a comparison with Christian exorcisms, he does go out of his way to stress the efficacy of Solomon's formulas and the force of his name in exorcizing demons. Moreover, the reason for his digression into a discussion of demons compelled according to Solomon's methods in *Antiquities*, was, in his own words, "that all men may know the vastness of Solomon's abilities, and how he was beloved of God."

To be sure, this is the report of a single Solomonic exorcism. It is not altogether clear what that statement meant at the time. Nonetheless, this earliest extant account, from Josephus' first century *Antiquities*, seems to be cast as participating in a polemic already underway. What follows is a set of further examples of *ex post facto* proofs that use precisely the same logic, relating an invocation of Solomon to the invocation of efficacious names. Within ten years of Josephus, the gospel accounts were recorded. In the following decades (and century) we find the accounts of Justin Martyr, Origen, Tertullian, and the anonymous Testament of Solomon. These are addressed in the next section.

Josephus: Earliest Jewish Witness to the Phenomenon

In this same world of Hellenic Judaism, merely a few decades later, we find the first explicit account of Solomonic demon compulsion as an evolution of earlier practice. In *Antiquities of the Jews* (CE 93), Flavius Josephus both provides a detailed description of a Solomonic exorcism and clearly demonstrates the relationship between ritual reenactment and the mythic *Urform*:

> Now the sagacity and wisdom which God had bestowed on Solomon was so great, that he exceeded the ancients; [….] God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day**;** for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers.
>
> The manner of the cure was this: He put a ring that had a Foot of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he abjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly: for which reason it is, that all men may know the vastness of Solomon's abilities, and how he was beloved of God, and that the extraordinary virtues of every kind with which this king was endowed may not be unknown to any people under the sun for this reason, I say, it is that we have proceeded to speak so largely of these matters.[51]

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[51] Josephus, *Ant*. 8.2.5 in: Flavius Josephus, William Whiston, Henry Stebbing, and David J. Ridges, *The Life and Essential Works of Flavius Josephus* (Cedar Fort: Plain Sight Publishing, 2013) 227.

Josephus draws attention to the connection between the legendary accomplishments of Solomon and the exorcisms he witnessed. Eleazar's use of a ring with a "Foot of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon"[52] to draw out the demon and the incantations that Solomon composed to adjure it together represent the mimetic recreation of the imagined *Urform* provided by the paradigmatic narrative of Solomon's own demon compulsion – allusion to the figure of Solomon in order to achieve *unio magica*.

But what if anything can be determined about the *condition of the performer* from Josephus' account? The idea of purity appears to be missing from this episode. Yet it is not. For the success of Eleazar's exorcisms is attributed to his adherence to Solomon's method and his reliance on Solomon's spiritual authority. Josephus is not concerned here with the purity of Eleazar, but with that of Solomon. Eleazar was able to exorcize demons because Solomon was able to so, and Solomon was able to exorcise demons because he could command demons with divine authority while he had the favor of God. Finally, Solomon had the favor of God because he kept the Law (i.e. purity laws).[53] As a result, Eleazar's success in compelling demons is understood not only as a *de facto* sign of his own purity, but as an *ex post facto* affirmation of Solomon's purity as well. In fact,

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[52] Here "foot" presumably refers here to the flat part of a signet ring. Later magical examples specify that a cabochon gem be engraved with the "Seal of Solomon" (i.e. the *pentalpha*) and the Sacred Names of God.

[53] 1 Kings 3:1-15 describes how God grants Solomon's request for wisdom. See especially verses 10-14: It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days. If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."

Josephus' insistence that it is Solomon's method that is "of great force unto this day" may have been his reason for including this account in *Antiquities*.

The portrait of Solomon that Josephus presents in this episode is of a great king, pious, wise, and beloved of God. Any discussion of the king's eventual turn to idolatry is absent here. The significance of this omission lies in the particular late antique Jewish understanding of purity as the absence-of-contamination or defilement and of idolatry as the chief source of contamination.[54] Josephus means for his reader to infer that God's chastisement of Solomon for his idolatry in 1 Kings 11 (verses 9-13)[55] did not include stripping him of his spiritual gifts (i.e. his authority over demons). Thus, though Josephus treats the subject of Solomon's apostasy elsewhere in *Antiquities*, by avoiding it here, he allows Solomon's spiritual authority to stand.[56]

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[54] Neusner clarifies in *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism*: "Purity and impurity – THR and TMP – are not hygienic categories and do not refer to observable cleanliness or dirtiness. The words refer to a status in respect to contact with a source of impurity. […] An inductive inquiry into the uses of the words unclean and clean in biblical literature will show that they occur chiefly with reference to cultic acts. If you are impure, you cannot enter the Temple or participate in certain cultic acts. If you are pure you may do so" (1). Elsewhere he writes, "What are the specific and concrete metaphors assigned to the metaphors of purity and impurity? First, impurity is seen as a sign of rejection of God or by God. […] Closely related to the use of purity as an indication of divine acceptance, second, is the very frequent allusion to idolatry as unclean. Just as impurity signifies the rejection of God, so the greatest rejection of all, represented by idolatry, will be understood as a principle source of impurity. Foreign gods defile, so Gen 35:2" (13f.).

[55] 1 Kings 11 describes Solomon's loss of favor with God. In 9-13, we read: "Now the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not observe what the Lord had commanded. So the Lord said to Solomon, 'Because you have done this, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you, and will give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David, *but* I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, *but* I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.'"

[56] Josephus' editorial choice not to address Solomon's idolatry directly in this episode is consistent with a larger pattern of "rewriting techniques" that C.T. Begg notes regarding Josephus' handling of the biblical source material in his portrayal of Solomon's apostasy in *Antiquities*. Begg identifies "a series of indications suggestive of Josephus' concern to play down, to some extent at least, the enormity of the king's offense as portrayed in the [biblical] source." See: C.T. Begg, "Solomon's Apostasy (1 Kgs. 11,1-13) According to Josephus," in the *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, 28.3 (1997): especially "conclusions," 309-313. In line with Begg's analysis, we argue that Josephus' inclusion of the Eleazar account seems to follow his program of attenuating Solomon's guilt of idolatry (i.e. impurity) by offering evidence that both Solomon's method and his spiritual authority in demon compulsion ("making still mention of Solomon") were still effective.

Following the same logic of Josephus' use of the efficacy of Solomonic exorcism as *ex post facto* evidence of God's continued favor for Solomon, early Christian apologists and polemists began to cite counterexamples – the failure of Solomonic demon compulsion – as evidence that Solomon had in fact lost divine favor. If Solomon fell from God's favor, they argued, then Jesus, and not Solomon, must therefore be the "Son of David" promised in prophecy: Solomon's disregard for the Law meant that he could not be who was intended. We see this logic at work a mere half century after *Antiquities*, in the *Dialogue with Trypho* (Ch. 85) of early Christian apologist Justin Martyr (100 – 165 CE) in which he undertakes to convince a Jewish interlocutor that Christianity is the new universal Law:

> [S]ome of you venture to expound the prophecy which runs, "Lift up your gates, ye rulers; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter," as if it referred likewise to Hezekiah, and others of you [expound it] of Solomon; but neither to the latter nor to the former, nor, in short, to any of your kings, can it be proved to have reference, but to this our Christ alone, […] and of this you may, if you will, easily be persuaded by the occurrences which take place before your eyes. For every demon, when exorcised in the name of this very Son of God […][57] is overcome and subdued. But though you exorcise any demon in the name of any of those who were amongst you—either kings, or righteous men, or prophets, or patriarchs—it will not be subject to you. But if any of you exorcise it in [the name of] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, it will perhaps be subject to you. Now assuredly your exorcists […] make use of craft when they exorcise, even as the Gentiles do, and employ fumigations and incantations.[58]

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[57] Again, according to the *ex post facto logic* of demon compulsion, the effectiveness of the compulsion (i.e. exorcism) confirms the validity of the epithet (in this case, "Son of God") by which the demon is compelled.

[58] George Reith, Marcus Dods, and B. P. Pratten *The Writings of Justin Martyr and Athenagoras* (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1867) 205.

Justin's argument reads as though it could have been directed at Josephus' exorcist, Eleazar.[59] Indeed, it is entirely possible that he had read Josephus' *Antiquities*. However, whether or not Justin's *Dialogue* was actually intended to be shared with Jews, the didactic purpose of instrumentalizing the apocryphal Solomon narrative is clear: the new Law of Christianity supersedes the old Law of Judaism and thus deliverance from demons can only be assured through adherence to the Christian religion – to the authority of Jesus as "king" rather than Solomon. Additionally, his derisive comment regarding the use of "craft" ("fumigations and incantations") suggests a concern for preventing the admixture of both foreign *rites* and *formulae* into Christian demon compulsion.[60] (We will return to this point in the following chapter in our discussion of Thomas Aquinas' treatment of the question of whether demons can be compelled by any "sensible" means – i.e. incense, amulets, etc. in his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*.)

A bit of third century Gospel commentary by Origen (184 – 254 CE) provides another example, similar to that in Justin's *Dialogue*, and it reveals a narrowing of focus on the figure of Solomon as the theology of demon compulsion continues to develop as part of the early Christian polemic against Judaism:

> Somebody asks if it is necessary to adjure demons: and whoever looks back to the many who have dared to do such things will say this may be done not without rationale. Whoever has watched Jesus commanding demons and also giving the power to his disciples over all demons that they may cure their infirmities, he will say that it is not according to the power given by the savior to compel demons

[59] Scholarly consensus would seem to be that the figure of Trypho does not represent a historical Jewish interlocutor, but rather a fictitious rhetorical construct. Setzer, for example, claims that, whether a character on which Trypho was based existed or not, one can generally assume that Trypho's words are "largely put in his mouth by Justin." See: Claudia J. Setzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christianity: History and Polemics: 30-150 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) 215. See also: Larry R. Helyer, *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Students* (Downers, Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2002. Print) 493.

[60] Examples of syncretic Christian magic in the Greek Magical Papyri certainly make such concerns understandable.

> because *that* is Jewish (Judaicum est enim) [61][It is customary to adjure demons with adjurations written by Solomon. But they themselves who use these adjurations sometimes use books not properly constituted; indeed they even adjure demons with some books taken from Hebrew.][62]

His commentary is obviously a reference to a continued practice of Solomonic demon compulsion in early Christianity, possibly like that described by Josephus. This would not be surprising. Even centuries after Origen's time, we continue to see from pilgrims' accounts of Jerusalem (like the *Jerusalem Breviary* cited in the introduction) that Solomon continued to be venerated for his ability as exorcist.[63] However, with Origen's comments, "*iudaicum est enim*" ("that is Jewish"), we can also see the emergence of a

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[61] Origène and Charles H. E. Lommatzsch. *Origenis opera omnia quae graece vel latine tantum exstant et ejus nomine circumferuntur: Tomus V, Pars III*. Berolini: Haude et Spener, 1835) "Quaeret aliquis, si convenit vel daemones adjurare; et qui respicit ad multos, qui talia facere ausi sunt, dicet non sine ratione fieri hoc. Qui autem adspicit Jesum imperantem daemonibus, sed etiam potestatem dantem discipulis suis super omnia daemonia, et ut infirmitates sanarent, dicet quoniam non est secundum potestatem datam a Salvatore, adjurare daemonia; Judaicum est enim. Hoc etsi aliquando a nostris tale aliquid, fiat, simile fit ei, quod a Salomone scriptis adjurationibus solent daemones adjurari. Sed ipsi, qui utuntur adjurationibus illis, aliquoties nec idoneis constitutis libris utuntur; quibusdam autem et de Hebraeo acceptis adjurant daemonia" (6-8).

[62] The bracketed portion of the translation is not my own. See: Mattheum comm. ser. (tract. 33) 110, Migne, *PG* vol. 13 1757; McCown, *Testament*, p. 94; *JPOS* 2 (1922) 9. See also: Duling (1983), 949.

[63] Torijano offers several examples in a note (p. 85): "The fourth century pilgrimage of he Spanish nun Egeria is the most conspicuous and early example of such 'touristic' visits to the holy places in Late Antiquity; she explicitly mentions both the seal and the spot where it was preserved (P. Geyer, *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, Vindobonae: 1893, p. 21): *At ubi autem oscultati fuerint crucem, pertransierint, stat diaconus, tenet anulum Salomonis et cornu illud, de quo reges ungebantur. Oscultantur et cornu, attendunt et anulum…* ("but when they had kissed the cross and passed by, the deacon stands, he holds the ring of Solomon and that horn, from which the kings were anointed. They kiss also the horn and give heed also to the ring"). In addition to this we can quote the testimony of a pilgrim from Bordeaux who wrote in 333 (Geyer, *Itenera*, 21): *Est ibi et crepta ubi Salomon daemones torquebat* ("the crypt where Solomon examined the demon is there as well"). A very similar note can be found in the *Breviarius de Hierosolyma* (Geyer, *Itinera*, p 154) which is dated to 530 C.E.: *illud cornu, quo David uncturs uest et Salomon et ille anilis ibidem, unde Salomon sigillavit demones, et est de electro* ("that horn, from which David was anointed and Solomon as well, and that ring, with which Solomon sealed the demons and which is made from electrum"). [...] Finally, we can observe in the following passage from the *Breviarius* (Geyer, *Itinera*, p. 153) how different traditions were integrated in everyday life: *in circuita duodecim columnae marmoreae (omnio incredibile), super ipsas columnas hydriae argenteae duodecim, ubi sigillavit Salomon daemones* ("in a circle there are twelve columns made of marble [absolutely unbelievable], over the same columns there are twelve vessels made of silver, where Solomon sealed the demons"). The pilgrim is describing the apse of the church of Constantine or, the Martyrium; the fact that elements from the traditions concerning Solomon's power over the demons were forged for the pious tourist again shows the popularity of such traditions and the inability of the church to uproot such beliefs from the people's imagination.

theological distinction between a right way and a wrong way – purity and impurity of belief and practice, as aligned with Christianity.[64]

Thus, in both the example from Origen and the previous example from Justin Martyr, what appears to be a concern with *formula* and even *rite* (in the Malinowskian sense) is in actuality still a concern with the *condition of the performer* as "purity" defined as the absence-of-defilement through idolatry. In early Christian apologia, reliance on the figure of Solomon as exorcistic authority appears to cast as the very sort impurity of which Solomon himself was guilty: idolatry. The choice of whether to adjure a demon by the authority of Solomon or the authority of Jesus is not merely a choice between *formulae*, but a choice between kings.[65]

We turn next to the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila*, dated to some time between the second half of the third and the sixth century CE.[66] Like Justin Martyr, the anonymous Christian author of this work frames his polemical apologia as a conversation between a Christian and a Jew. Also like Justin, the author uses the dialogue to counter the Jewish assertion that Solomon represented the fulfillment of those Hebrew

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[64] It is clear that Origen read Josephus; see: Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen* (London [u.a.: Routledge, 2004) 73. However, it is less clear how many Jews there were in Alexandria when he lived there and how much he would know about their exorcisms from first hand experience.

[65] MacMullen underscores the idea of divine kingship in his book: "It was exiguous: monotheism, to begin with. That was taught, and God was compared, in familiar fashion, to a monarch with his companies of servants about him; and contrast was drawn between him and mere imitations, the daimones that passed for gods by animating idols and so forth. Word spread of divine wrath and punishments, the more readily imagined through being leveled at evildoers resurrected in the flesh; while immortal delights were also known to await the blessed. The very stark blacks and whites of this whole crude picture of Christianity, and the unsteady focus on the role of Jesus, are most striking" (21). One might also consider the emergence of distinct concept of "heresy" within Christian discourse during this time as a sort of "doctrinal impurity." The term first appears in the famous *Adversus Haereses* (ca. 180) of Origen's contemporary, Irenaeus of Lyon (d. 202 CE). Demonstrating the possible connection between "impurity" and "heresy" in the writings of Irenaeus, however, lies outside the scope of the present project.

[66] For a recent discussion of the difficulties of dating *Timothy and Aquila* and a new hypothesis, see: Jacqueline Z. Pastis, "Dating the Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila: Revisiting the Earlier Vorlage Hypothesis" *The Harvard Theological Review* 95.2 (2002): 195.

prophecies, which Christians held to refer to Jesus. For instance, when Aquila, the Jew, insists that Psalm 2:7 ("You are my son; today I have begotten you") refers to Solomon, Timothy cites Solomon's idolatry and exogamy (1 Kings 11:1-8) as proof of the impossibility of the claim.

Unlike Justin, the author of *Timothy and Aquila* does not appeal directly to Solomon's lack of authority over demons as evidence of his loss of the favor of God, but rather to an apocryphal account in which Solomon offers sacrifice to idols (9:8-13):

> "Know, therefore, that Solomon greatly provoked the Lord God of heaven, because he disobeyed him. So the anger of the Lord was upon Solomon, and He spoke to Ahijah the Shilonite that he should anoint Jereboam son of Nebat as king over Jerusalem, saying to him: *if David was not my servant, I would destroy Solomon* (1 Kings 11:34). "Know then, oh Jew, that he worshipped graven images and slaughtered locusts to them." The Jew said: He did not slaughter them but he crushed them in his hand unwillingly. However these things are not included in the book of the Kings but are written in his Testament." The Christian said: "Then it is all the more certain because this was not revealed by the hand of a historian but was made known by Solomon himself."[67]

While Solomon's turn to idolatry is canonical, this particular account of his sacrificing locusts to foreign gods is not. There is, in fact, only one other contemporaneous account from which it is known: the apocryphal *Testament of Solomon* to which Aquila's comment appears to refer. In the final chapters of the *Testament*, Solomon relates how, seduced by the beauty of a foreign woman, he agreed to sacrifice locusts to the gods Raphan and Moloch and thus fell from God's grace, losing his power over the demons (*TSol*, 26.8).

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[67] William C. Varner and Evagrius, *Ancient Jewish-Christian Dialogues: Athanasius and Zacchaeus, Simon and Theophilus, Timothy and Aquila: Introductions, Texts, and Translations* (Lewiston, N.Y: E. Mellen Press, 2004) 157.

The author of *Timothy and Aquila* presents the admission of idolatry (impurity) in the *Testament* "made known by Solomon himself," as a signed confession. While the final chapters of the *Testament* indeed describe Solomon's sacrifice of locusts, the account there is presented as part of the clearest, most developed narrative from any late antique or medieval source of Solomon's loss of authority over demons as a consequence of his idolatry. Thus, it would seem, the author of *Timothy and Aquila* has nevertheless indirectly appealed to the question of Solomon's authority over demons as evidence of his loss of the favor of God.

The status of the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* is clearly that of apologia or polemic and not that of ritual text, but the same cannot be said of the *Testament of Solomon*. Its peculiar straddling of those two categories will be discussed below. However, it is significant that part of its narrative belongs to the early Christian polemic against Solomon – the same part that presages the anti-magic theology of Thomas Aquinas.

The *Testament of Solomon*

We come now to the most developed example of the extra-biblical reputation of Solomon as engaged with demon compulsion known to us from late antiquity or the Middle Ages, the *Testament of Solomon*. The anonymous *Testament* represents a significant development in theology, magic, and polemics of the discourse of Solomonic demon compulsion. For the first time, we find a clear and developed example of compulsion of demons (within the Solomonic context) for purposes other than expulsion

or banishment – for "magical" purposes.[68] Equally significantly, we also see God strip Solomon explicitly of his authority over demons as a consequence of his idolatry.[69] Whether the details of Solomon's reputation as exorcist, the means by which he was able to compel the demons, and the manner in which he lost that ability originated with the *Testament of Solomon*, whether they were first recorded there, or whether the *Testament* is simply the oldest extant record of these details, the *Testament* has become the source of our understanding of an extensive and well-represented tradition of "Solomonic" magic, based on its the narrative of Solomon's demon compulsion.[70]

Nonetheless, the *Testament*, as it is known in its reconstructed form,[71] is a baffling text. It appears to function equally well as a pro-magic apologia, early Christian pseudepigraphon (complete with prophecies of the crucifixion put into the mouths of demons who are bound by Solomon), Jewish aggadah, and as a disguise for a manual of pre-Christian ritual "magic." Given its interstitial qualities, the *Testament* could also be discussed as a ritual text. Its significance as such, however, fall largely outside the scope of the present study. Nevertheless, because the author (or possibly a later redactor) of

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[68] Note Josephus' exorcist, Eleazar, has the demon knock over a basin of water as proof of its expulsion (as well as its existence). Compare with Mark 5:1-20 & Luke 8:26-39.

[69] Salzberger notes this as the first reference to Solomon's compulsion of demons to assist in the construction of the Temple: Immerhin wird es hier zum ersten Male ausgesprochen, daß Sal. Geister beim Tempelbau verwendet habe und daß er, durch die Liebe zu einer Jebusiterin in heidnischen Kult verstrickt, der Macht über die Geister verlustig gegangen und ihnen zum Gespött geworden sei." See: Georg Salzberger, *Die Salomosage in der Semitischen Literatur: Ein Beitrag zur Vergleichenden Sagenkunde* (Berlin, 1907) 11.

[70] See quotes in chapter 3, especially Peuckert.

[71] With reference to the reconstructed nature of the text as it is known, Klutz writes, "[What] is conveniently called 'the *Testament of Solomon*' is not so much a solid text with a clear identity as it is a blurry and elusive textual space thinly populated by an assortment of heterogeneous manuscripts whose chief source of unity is their mutual interest in certain secrets obtained by Solomon from the demonic realm." The idea that the catalogue of demons, which makes up largest portion of the *Testament*, may represent an older complete, and possibly ritual (i.e. "magical") text is the basic thesis in: Todd E. Klutz, "The Archer and the Cross: Chorographic Astrology and Literary Design in the Testament of Solomon," *Magic in the Biblical World: From the Rod of Aaron to the Ring of Solomon* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004) 219-44, quote from 224.

Timothy and Aquila has rhetorically handled the *Testament* as scriptural authority in the portion of the text which was quoted above, it is also worth discussing its ending as a crucial part of the paradigmatic narrative which establishes the *rite*, the *formula*, and the *condition of the performer* in the narrative of Solomon's power over demons.

The account given in the *Testament* is quite detailed. During the construction of the Temple, Solomon becomes aware that a young worker whom he favors has become increasingly thin and weak. Dismayed, Solomon questions the boy, curious how it is that, despite his being paid twice as much as the other laborers and receiving a double portion of food, the boy is wasting away. When confronted by the king, the young worker reveals that he is tormented every night by the demon Ornias, who robs him of half pay and half of his food and, furthermore, drains off much of his strength by sucking the thumb of the boy's right hand. At this explanation, the King understands and resolves to appeal to God for help.

The details of what follows are significant enough to later discussion as to warrant being quoted directly here from D. Duling's English translation of the *Testament*:

> When I, Solomon, heard these things, I went into the Temple of God and, praising him day and night, begged with all my soul that the demon might be delivered into my hands and that I might have authority over him. Then it happened that while I was praying to the God of heaven and earth, there was granted me from the Lord Sabaoth through the archangel Michael a ring which had a seal engraved on precious stone. He said to me, "Solomon, Son of David, take the gift which the Lord God, the highest Sabaoth, has sent to you; (with it) you shall imprison all the demons, both female and male, and with their help you shall build Jerusalem when you bear this seal of God.[72]

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[72] Denis C. Duling, "Testament of Solomon." *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 1: Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, edited by James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983) 935–987, here 962. Conybeare's 1898 translation includes here the line: "And this engraving of the seal of the ring sent thee is a *Pentalpha*." Here, "pentalpha" refers to the pentagram because five uppercase A's can be arranged and overlapped to create the shape.

The following morning, Solomon summons the boy, instructs him to take the ring, and that night, when the demons appears, to cast it against the breast of the demon. Having thus bound the demon, he is to exclaim, "Come! Solomon summons you."[73] This the boy does, thus binding the demon, and then dragging him to the throne of Solomon. There, the king questions the demon and subsequently orders him to retrieve the Lord of all the demons, Beezelbul. Ornias obeys and returns with Beezelbul, whom Solomon also seals with the ring. Solomon then questions him insistently in spite of his arrogant behavior, and finally, Beezelbul is made to present all the other unclean evil spirits, one at a time, to Solomon.[74]

The first three chapters thus establish a frame story for the catalogue of demons which follows in great detail, in chapters 4-25. One by one, Solomon seals each demon with the ring, questions it about its name and the maladies or misfortunes for which it is responsible, for its astrological constellation ("In which sign of the zodiac do you live?"), and then for the name of the angel who presides over it and who has the power to constrain it. Finally, Solomon forces each demon to participate in the construction of the

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There are a few such notable differences between Duling's translation and that of Conybeare in: F. C. Conybeare, "The Testament of Solomon," *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 11.1 (1898): 1-45. Joseph Peterson provides a side-by-side comparison of these two translations. See: Joseph Peterson, "The Testament of Solomon," Esoteric Archives, 1997; web, 30 July 2017, <http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/testamen.htm>.

[73] Here, Conybeare's translation reads: "In the name of God, Solomon calls thee hither." See previous note for reference to side-by-side comparison.

[74] It is interesting to note that Aquinas demonology in *De Potentia* is consistent with this portrayal of the more powerful demons' abilities to compel the less powerful. In *De Potentia Dei* (vi, 10) he writes "Sometimes too [demons] are compelled by superior demons; and this compulsion alone can be effected by means of magic." Whether or not Aquinas was familiar with the *Testament*, such commonalities in cosmology between "Solomonic" magic and Aquinas' anti-magic theology support the suggestion that Aquinas' anti-magic strategy was largely a targeted response to that tradition of magical practice.

Temple: spinning hemp, sawing marble stone, or lifting heavy stone and passing them on to the workers.

After the parade of demons is complete, the *Testament* returns to the narrative frame to undercut the figure of Solomon and put a definitive end to his apotropaic power. Solomon turns to his audience and relates how, seduced by the beauty of a foreign woman, he agreed to sacrifice locusts to the gods Raphan and Moloch and thus fell out of God's grace, losing his power over the demons (*TSol*, 26.8). He ends his *Testament* by exhorting other people to use the information that he has passed on to them to protect themselves against demons as best they can, and to resist temptations to leave their faith better than he had (*TSol*, 26.8). Once again, for the sake of detail, I quote directly:

> [...] However, I did not want to worship (their gods), so I said to them, "I will worship no foreign god."
>
> But they threatened violence against the maiden, saying, "If you have the opportunity to go to the kingdom of Solomon, say to him, 'I will not go to bed with you unless you become like my people and take five locusts and sacrifice them in the name of Raphan and Molech.'" So because I loved the girl - she was in full bloom and I was out of my senses - I accepted as nothing the custom (of sacrificing) the blood of locusts. I took them in my hands and sacrificed in the name of Raphan and Molech to idols, and I took the maiden to the palace of my kingdom.
>
> So the spirit of God departed from me and from that day on my words became as idol talk. She convinced me to build a temple to idols.
>
> As a result I, wretched man that I am, carried out her advice an the glory of God completely departed from me; my spirit was darkened and I became as a laughing stock to the idols and demons. For this reason I have written out this, my testament, in order that those who hear might pray about, and pay attention to, the last things and not to the first things, in oder that they might finally find grace forever. Amen."[75]

[75] Duling (1983), 986f. Conybeare's translation of the same passage is slightly different. See Conybeare (1898): "And when I answered that I would on no account worship strange gods, they told the maiden not to sleep with me until I

At this point, the apocryphal narrative is at its most developed; this represents the most complete version of the trope to which both later manuals of ritual magic and anti-magic theological arguments harken back. Solomon's power over demons is explicitly divinely authorized. The ring, already present in Josephus and the accounts of early Christian pilgrims, is accounted for. The names and astrological associations, as well as the names of the angels by whom the demons are compelled are present. The names of the demons are also present.

Finally, the *Testament* adds to the narrative conditions leading to the explicit loss of Solomon's control over demons: "I then, wretch that I am, followed her advice, and then the glory of God quite departed from me; and my spirit was darkened, and I became the sport of idols and demons." This element of the text absolutely serves the previous polemic of Justin and Origen by confirming (albeit pseudepigraphically) that Solomon's spiritual authority is nullified – exactly the portrait of Solomon that Josephus was trying to avoid. Interestingly, and somewhat paradoxically, it also fits the logics of both later ritual texts which insist on a "pure" condition of the performer and of an argument by Aquinas' (discussed below) in which he effectively argues against the possibility of a Solomonic magic because of the loss of his purity through idolatry.

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complied and sacrificed to the gods. I then was moved, but crafty *Eros* brought and laid by her for me five grasshoppers, saying: "Take these grasshoppers, and crush them together in the name of the god *Moloch*; and then I will sleep with you." And this I actually did. And at once the Spirit of God departed from me, and I became weak as well as foolish in my words. After that I was obliged by her to build a temple of idols to *Baal*, and *Rapha*, and to *Moloch*, and to the other idols. I then, wretch that I am, followed her advice, and then the glory of God quite departed from me; and my spirit was darkened, and I became the sport of idols and demons. Wherefore I wrote out this *Testament*, that ye who get possession of it may pray, and attend to the last things, and not to the first. So that ye may find grace forever and ever. Amen" 45.

Conclusion

The loss of Solomon's favor with God, which Josephus sought to attenuate and Christian apologists sought to elaborate, is significant to early Christian theology because of how it relates to his spiritual authority. Exorcism (demon compulsion) in the ancient world of the Evangelists, Josephus, and the early apologists provided a platform for testing the force of divine authority. If an exorcism failed to expel a demon, the natural inclination of the polytheistic exorcist would likely have been to seek the aid of a stronger god, not to question his own faith. We find ample evidence that the competition between divine kings included not only Solomon and Jesus, but also Helios, Hermes Trismegistus, and others whose sacred names are invoked for the compulsion of demons in similar charms or even together in a single charm. The perceived efficacy of a "Solomonic" exorcism – regardless whether that would have meant *in the name of* Solomon or according to a *formula* which he provided – would render the recognition of Jesus as the fulfillment of Hebrew prophecies as optional or even unnecessary.

What was at stake in this shift of narrative was monotheism. Evidence from recovered caches of magical *formulae* like those cited here suggests a tendency toward syncretism – toward merely adding Jesus to an increasingly crowded late antique pantheon. Devotion to the pagan deities and divine kings of Hellenized Egypt was combated as idolatry – as false and offensive to God (much the same terms on which it was rejected in Jewish law.) Solomon's position, however, was necessarily different. His story – his role as divinely appointed king of a monotheistic tribe that rejected the

physical depiction of the divine – meant that he could not simply be written out of the narrative. He had to be deposed.

It is in this context that we must understand the Christian polemical position that Solomon lost his authority as a result of his idolatry which we find in the Justin Martyr's, *Dialogue with Trypho*, was already present as the unheard counterpoint to Josephus' description of the Eleazar episode. Both Justin and Origen would have had in mind the words of the author of Acts of the Apostles 19:13-20 (ca. 80-90 CE, almost exactly the same time as Josephus), who writes:

> But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.[76]

The continued association of that authority with demon compulsion challenged the legitimacy of Jesus as the fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy. Christian apologists understood that the trope of Jesus' ability to drive out demons could only be rhetorically effective as a sign of his divinity (divine kingship) if the same could not be said of

[76] Acts 19:13-20.

Solomon, or indeed, any other divine king.[77] Because Christian canon and Christian culture recognized that God had once granted Solomon such authority – indeed, the legitimacy of the prophecies which the Christians cited as proof of Jesus' authority depended upon it –,[78] the resulting bind necessitated a demonstrable, definitive end to Solomon's authority over demons. Solomon's chastisement in Kings for defiling himself with idols – breaking the chiefest of purity laws – provided that. As a result of the Christian polemic, in the case of Solomon, the *condition of the performer* took on heightened significance, and with it, it would seem, the condition of any demon compeller.

The efficacy of demon-compulsion thus continued as a major site of the polemic over Jesus as the fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy. However, the attention that was devoted to the polemical discourse seems to have had at least two important secondary effects, which, in turn, reshaped the discourse as it persisted into the Middle Ages – the subject of the next chapter. First, it seems that in the process of apologetic instruction of neophyte Christians in the proper *formula* (i.e. the name of Jesus) not only the *rite*, but also the *formula* became public knowledge. Note: this is contrary to Malinowski's model. As a result of that, it seems, it was the *condition of the performer* rather than the *formula*,

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[77] In the Greek magical papyri we see the drama of the early Christian apologists being played out. For example, *PGM* IV. 1227-64 reads: "Excellent rite for driving out daimons: *Formula* to be spoken over his head: Place olive branches before him, / and stand behind him and say: "Hail, God of Abraham; hail, God of Isaac; hail God of Jacob; Jesus Chrestos, the Holy Spirit, the Son of the Father, who is above the Seven,/ who is within the Seven. Bring Iao Sabaoth; may your power issue forth from him, NN, until you drive away this unclean daimon Satan, who is in him. I conjure you, daimon, / whoever you are, by this god SABARBARBATHIŌTH SABARBARBATHIOUTH SABARBARBATHIŌNĒTH SABARBARBAPHAI. Come out, daimon, whoever you are, and stay away from him, NN, / now, now; immediately, immediately. Come out, daimon, since I bind you with unbreakable adamantine fetters, and I deliver you into the black chaos in perdition." Betz 62.

[78] Refer again to note on page 75 for several late antique Christian examples of the continued veneration of Solomon as exorcist.

which became the most important part of the "magic" of demon compulsion and the most significant to the limiting of "magical" or exorcistic authority in the developing institutional Church. Second, the more polemics were devoted to Solomon's *prior* authority and the more detailed the accounts of his loss of that authority, the more fitting the narrative became for the kind of allusive potential Salzer describes as *unio magica*. Thus, even if the "Solomonic" magic, which the theologians discussed in the following chapter struggled to combat, did not causally result from the proliferation of the apocryphal narrative through late antique polemics and *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics, then, at the very least, it certainly benefited from them.

CHAPTER 2:

PURITY AS THE PRESENCE-OF-GRACE:

THE SCHOLASTIC TURN

In this chapter, we examine the next development in the spiritualization and metaphoricization of purity as the *condition of the performer* within traditions of Solomonic demon compulsion in Christian theological discourse. The development to be discussed in this chapter did not follow immediately on the heels of Christian Antiquity, but rather, occurred over centuries in something like a chain reaction, transforming the rhetorical forms found in the narrative tradition I sketched above in the texts that clearly associate themselves more with arguments from Christian Antiquity (e.g. the use of the figure of Solomon in *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics). Christian discourse on demon compulsion, which alluded to Solomon as the prototypical actor persisted, but the specific

forms and functions of the discussions changed. So too did the texts which presented these discussions. Traditional narrative source materials persisted as part of the foundation of Christianity's later developments, but they found new forms in texts that had to do different kinds of social, political, and theological work.

Most critically, as the concept of original sin articulated by Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE) became doctrine, it necessarily impacted Christian constructs of purity because it fundamentally changed the Christian understanding of defilement (i.e. "impurity"). Familiarly, Augustine argued that original sin was a universal condition resulting from the inheritance of the guilt of Adam (defilement) that could only be overcome (i.e. "purified") by means of God's grace.[79] Though Augustine's model of original sin was not unopposed, it ultimately prevailed. Thus the previous understanding of purity as the absence-of-contamination or defilement gradually became a theological non-starter, because original sin represented universal contamination – the *de facto* state of humanity was "impure." Yet in order for purity to be redefined from the absence-of-contamination to the presence-of-grace, the institutional Church would have to essentially

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[79] See: Ernesto Bonaiuti and Giorgio La Piana, "The Genesis of St. Augustine's Idea of Original Sin," *The Harvard Theological Review*, 10.2, (1917) 159–175, here 163f. Summarizing Augustine's position, the authors write: "Mankind is thus an agglomeration of condemned creatures which cannot acquire any merit before God, and whose hopes for forgiveness and atonement are only in the benevolent grace of the Father and the infallible decree of his predestination." Moreover, they cite from Augustine's writings as follows: "Ex quo in paradiso natura nostra peccavit, non secundum spiritum, sed secundum carnem, mortali generatione formamur, et omnes una *massa luti* facti sumus, quod est *massa peccati*. Cum ergo meritum peccando amiserimus, nihil aliud, peccantibus, nisi aeterna damnatio debetur" (De LXXXIII Quaestionibus: 9, 68, 3). . . . Tunc facta est *una massa omnium*, veniens de traduce peccati et de forma mortalitatis. . ... Sunt igitur omnes homines *una quaedam massa peccati*, supplicium debens divinae summaeque justitiae, quod sive exigatur, sive donetur nulla est iniquitas. A quibus autem exigendum est et quibus donandum sit, superbe judicant debitores; quemadmodum conducti ad illam vineam iniuste indignati sunt, cum tantummodo aliis donaretur, quantum illis reddetur" (De Divinis Quaestionibus num, I, 16). Agustín and Jacques-Paul Migne, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini, Hipponensis Episcopi, Opera Omnia: Post Lovaniensium theologorum recensionem castigata denuo ad manuscriptos codices gallicos, Vaticanos, Belgicos, etc.; nencnon ad editiones antiquiores et castigatiores, opera et studio monachorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti e congregatione S. Mauri: vol. 6* (Parisiis: Venit apud editorem [J.-P. Migne, 1841) 121.

commodify grace. This it did gradually as it shaped its doctrine of sacramental grace, the full articulation of which comes in the *Summa Theologia* (written 1265-1274) of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) who writes, "God's grace is a sufficient cause of man's salvation. But God gives grace to man in a way which is suitable to him. Hence it is that man needs the sacraments that he may obtain grace."[80] Once grace became something that could be *obtained* in defined ways (mediated through the Church's sacraments), it was possible to effectively understand purity by the presence of grace, rather than by the absence of contamination or defilement – one either had grace or one didn't.

As we shall see, the turn in the spiritualization and metaphoricization of purity which Aquinas articulates in his *Summa* also enabled him to create a distinction in his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66) between exorcism as licit demon compulsion in which the *condition of the performer* is understood as pure (i.e. a state of grace; "*in statu salutis*") and *nigromantia* as illicit demon compulsion, in which requisite the *condition of the performer* impure (or a state of sin). Because the institutional Church controlled the sacraments as conduits of grace-as-purity (See above, *Summa Theologia* Q 61. A1. Reply to objection 2), it could also claim control over all licit demon compulsion and with it, authority on the matter of demons (i.e. demonology). Furthermore, not only does Aquinas provide a theological distinction between exorcism and "magic" by stipulating his construct of presence-of-grace (i.e. purity) as the defining *condition of the performer* of the licit, ecclesiastically authorized exorcist, he actually uses the apocryphal

[80] Aquinas, *ST* III, Q 61, A1, ad 2.: "Ad secundum dicendum quod gratia Dei est sufficiens causa humanae salutis. Sed Deus dat hominibus gratiam secundum modum eis convenientem. Et ideo necessaria sunt hominibus sacramenta ad gratiam consequendam."

narrative of Solomon's power over demons to do so. For this reason, the medieval Scholastic theology of Thomas Aquinas stands at the center of our investigation in this chapter – it demonstrates not only the persistence of older narrative materials (particularly the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons) in the evolving Church, but also provides a clear example of how Aquinas and other Scholastic theologians mobilized the category of "purity" within their theological argumentation to establish and enforce orthopraxy.

The material in this chapter is organized in to a roughly chronological presentation, as in the previous chapter, addressing a further selection of texts that reference the narrative tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion. The examples are drawn from anti-magic theology (i.e. demonology), and are divided into two main sections. The reason for this is that the influence of Thomas Aquinas in the development of Catholic anti-magic theology (as demonology) is so significant as to warrant its presentation in a "before and after" with respect to Aquinas' intervention.

The aims of this chapter are as follows. First, we will reveal that, during the medieval Scholastic period, the idea of purity as *condition of the performer* in Christian discourses of demon compulsion changes from Christian Antiquity's definition of purity as absence-of-contamination or defilement (in this case, the contamination of Christianity through syncretic practices and beliefs, as discussed in the previous chapter) to purity as the presence-of-grace. This formulation both responds to and depends on many threads of contemporaneous theological discussion, such as the doctrine of original sin, already discussed. Catholic teaching on demon compulsion specifically, can be traced to the

theology of Thomas Aquinas who uses the idea of grace-as-purity to force a distinction between, on the one hand, licit demon compulsion (as exorcism) in which the requisite *condition of the performer* is "pure," and, on the other, illicit demon compulsion (as *nigromantia*) in which the requisite *condition of the performer* is "impure."

Second, we will adduce evidence which suggests that Aquinas' innovation in anti-magic theology was at least partially a response to specific historical developments in the relationship of the Dominican Order with European Jews, specifically the Dominican discovery of the *Toledot Yeshu* (*The Life of Jesus*), a medieval Jewish satire about the life of Jesus in which Jesus was portrayed as a magician.[81] Third and finally, this chapter will reveal that, by instrumentalizing the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons – deploying within Catholic theological discourse what had originally been part of a *Contra-Iudaeos* polemic –, Aquinas helped not only to create the medieval idea of *nigromantia* as polemic against heterodox practices of efficacious ritual, but also to shape actual magical practice in the later middle ages as his construct of purity as presence-of-grace incorporated into manuals of ritual magic.

Medieval Anti-Magic Theology before Aquinas

In this section, we outline the challenges faced by medieval Catholic theologians in regulating practices of ritual demon compulsion – that is, to bringing under institutional control a set of familiar but poorly defined "religious" practices from the

[81] Some scholars assert date the source material to no earlier than the 6th century, and the compilation no earlier than the 9th century. See: Roland, H. Worth Jr., *Alternative Lives of Jesus: Noncanonical accounts through the early Middle Ages* (2003, NC, McFarland & Co.) 49f.

earlier, less hierarchically organized Christianity of late antiquity. Before Aquinas' mid-thirteenth-century *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*, there was no consistent, practical and demonstrable distinction between licit "exorcistic" demon compulsion and illicit "magical" demon compulsion. To be sure, centuries earlier, Augustine (354-430 CE) had defined magic as a demonic pact,[82] but actual ritual texts of the medieval period – particularly those with allusions to the apocryphal Solomon narrative – were framed in terms of demon compulsion by the power of God through the action of a "pure" human agent and not in terms of cooperation with a demon as part of a pact. Augustine had, therefore, defined the demonic *pact*, but not refuted demon *compulsion* by other means in any thorough-going way. By Aquinas' era, what early apologists had offered as a selling point of Christianity – easy access to supernatural authority over demons[83] – had become a liability and a threat to the hierarchy of the institutional Church. Yet unfortunately for orthodox anti-magic theologians, there was little within the *praxis* of Christian demon compulsion to which to object because there was no clear, external distinction between licit and illicit forms which could be discerned from the texts that were scrutinized by the theologians.[84]

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[82] Aquinas, in the formulation of his own anti-magic theology (*ST II-II*, Q 96, A 1, resp.) cites Augustine's concept of the pact: The magic art is both unlawful and futile. It is unlawful, because the means it employs for acquiring knowledge have not in themselves the power to cause science, consisting as they do in gazing certain shapes, and muttering certain strange words, and so forth. Wherefore this art does not make use of these things as causes, but as signs; not however as signs instituted by God, as are the sacramental signs. It follows, therefore, that they are empty signs, and consequently a kind of "agreement or covenant made with the demons for the purpose of consultation and of compact by tokens" [Augustine, De Doctr. Christ. ii, 20; see above (II-II:92:2. Wherefore the magic art is to be absolutely repudiated and avoided by Christian, even as other arts of vain and noxious superstition, as Augustine declares (De Doctr. Christ. ii, 23).

[83] See the discussion of McMullen in previous chapter and of Acts 19:13-20.

[84] See note about compulsion, adjuration, and exorcism on page 59.

As we will see, medieval Scholastic theologians before Aquinas who argued against Solomonic demon compulsion struggled against medieval magicians' constructions of "purity" as requisite *condition of the performer* in their rituals. The theologians who wrote against demon compulsion as *nigromantia* at that point, however, had only defined it as involving *explicit* pacts with demons, but not yet including *implicit* pacts – the rhetorical stroke which later allowed Aquinas in his definition of magic to prohibit a multitude of ritual practices. Thus the theologians faced a double bind: in order to delegitimize the *condition of the performer* of unauthorized demon compulsion as "pure," they would have to deny the efficacy of many of the practices (fasting, abstinence, etc.) for the attainment of the "purity" by which they authorized themselves as clergy (including their own demon compulsion). Yet to draw this line between licit and illicit demon compulsion was a practical requirement, since the authors of earlier medieval manuals of demon compulsion had already identified in "purity" an authorization and legitimation of their practices (as in the case of the *Testament*). That conflation would have been difficult for orthodox theologians to undermine, for what could be objectionable about the fasting and abstinence by which the magician prepared for his rituals, if his practices of "purity" were identical to those by which the clergy also governed their own lives and legitimated their own authority?

Unfortunately, few Christian texts of Solomonic ritual demon compulsion survive from this early period, though we can be assured of the circulation of these texts by virtue of the fact that they are often mentioned by name in early theological prohibitions (some of which will be discussed below). Moreover, while many survive in later copies or

recensions, these are not necessarily reliable witnesses to all of the details of the texts in the forms in which medieval theologians knew them – texts of ritual magic often evolve through the intervention of the copyist.[85] For that reason our investigation here will be limited to anti-magic theological responses to Solomonic pseudoepigrapha and will not include the analysis of ritual texts from the twelfth century or earlier.

Yet the relative scarcity of surviving manuscripts of ritual texts dating from this early period does not undermine our methodology. Because our interest is in the turn in the definition of "purity" as *condition of the performer* affected by Aquinas within the context of the anti-magic theology of his argument in the *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*, it suffices to compare his anti-magic argument to alternate anti-magic theological arguments preceding and roughly contemporaneous with his own. The comparison between Aquinas' construction of purity related and earlier textual examples of ritual demon compulsion reveals a decided difference in the respective approaches to the idea of purity as *condition of the performer* between Aquinas and those theologians who preceded him.

As already intimated, the innovation of Aquinas' argument is that it requires purity as the presence-of-grace, but that it also makes grace unattainable outside the Church. Thus Aquinas has brought any licit demon compulsion under the Church's control, given that the *condition of the performer* of any extra-ecclesial demon compulsion is *de facto* impure. At this point, the goal of this chapter is to demonstrate the turn in Aquinas' anti-magical theological definition of purity as *condition of the*

[85] The concern is this: if my hypothesis is correct and ideas of purity change with time, then later recensions would probably include additions or alterations that reflect later ideas of purity.

performer in ritual demon compulsion. Only then will it allow us to show how Aquinas' theological innovation was adopted into actual the texts (and therefore presumably also practice) of illicit ritual demon compulsion (i.e. *nigromantia*). These two steps will reveal not only Church's evolving resistance to magic theology outside its own control, but also how the narrative materials associated with Solomonic magic were used in new ways in a new generation of ritual texts that demonstrate a turn in the discourse as a whole, which will be discussed briefly in the conclusion to the project.

That such a turn might occur in the entire magic/anti-magic discourse is not surprising, given that Solomonic demon compulsion was not an outside threat. Most, if not all, medieval magicians were actually clergy.[86] Thus if the practice of Solomonic demon compulsion as "magic" was turning into a threat, it was a threat to orthodoxy as much as anything else. Just as had been the case in Christian antiquity the danger was that the figure of Solomon – either through pseudepigrapha or the allusive potential (i.e. *unio magica*) of the apocryphal narrative – represented a source of power and authority outside the Church's control. Early apologists who had simply argued against the effectiveness of Solomon's exorcisms had clearly failed to be convincing, for more and more ritual texts attributed to the Jewish monarch appeared during the course the Middle Ages.[87]

The popularity of these texts meant that they needed to be addressed. Even a number of important theologians – at least prior to Aquinas – appear to have taken parts

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[86] Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge u.a: Cambridge Univ. Pr, 2009) 153.

[87] See, for example, the article by Julien Véronèse: "God's Names and Their Uses in the Books of Magic Attributed to King Solomon," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 5.1 (2010): 30-50, which compiles numerous examples of such ritual texts.

of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons quite seriously. Peter Comestor (1100-1178), for instance, considers Josephus' account of the exorcist Eleazar in *Antiquities* a reliable source with regard to Jewish methods of demon compulsion. However, he is explicit in casting Solomon's role and authority as superseded by that of Jesus. In his *Historia Scholastica*, Peter writes:

> [Solomon] also devised characters which were inscribed on gems and placed in the noses of the possessed with conspicuous root of Solomon; immediately he freed the possessed from demons. This knowledge was of great value to many in the Hebrew nation, and was greatly necessary. Before the coming of Christ men were often troubled by demons, because they sometimes thrust them down alive into hell. Josephus also testifies that he saw a certain exorcist, Eleazar, before Vespasian and his sons and princes, curing those troubled by demons in this aforesaid manner, and in order to prove to them the leaving of the demon through the nose by the spirit of the breath, he placed a basin in their midst, and ordered the demon as he was leaving to overturn it in proof of his leaving; and thus he did.[88]

This appraisal has led multiple scholars to conclude that Peter Comestor recognized Solomon as the father of exorcism (rather than "magic" in the later sense of *nigromantia*) even as he claims that the power that individual earlier demon-compellers had commanded has become contingent upon Christian revelation.[89]

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[88] See: Liber III Regnum, in *Patrologia Latina* 198:1352."Exogitavit etiam characteres, qui inscribebantur gemmis, quae posita in naribus arreptitii, cum radice Salomoni monstrata, statim eum a daemonibus liberabat. Haec scientia plurimum valuit in gente Hebraeorum, et maxime necessaria erat. Ante adventum enim Christi saepius homines a daemonibus vexabantur, quod homines vivos ad infernum quandoque detrudebant. Josephus (8.5) quoque testatur se vidisse quemdam Eleazarum exorcistam coram Vespasiano, et filiis ejus, et tyrannis, in hunc modum praedictum curantem vexatos a daemonibus, et ut proparet eis daemonum egressum per nares cum spiritu anhelantis, vas ponebat in medio, et imperabat daemoni egresso, ut illud everteret in argumentum suae egressionis; et ita fiebat." The English translation is taken from: Robert M Correale and Mary Hamel *Sources and Analogues of the Canterbury Tales: Vol. 1* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2003) 196.

[89] Francis Young, *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 71.

Similarly, Thomas of Chobham (c. 1160-1233/36, active 1200-1233)[90] speculated at some length as to nature of Solomon's power over demons. We include here his speculations on Solomon's power over demons in his *Summa Confessorum* (c. 1216)[91] to further demonstrate the credulousness of orthodox theologians with regard to the discourse in the decades preceding Aquinas' intervention with his *Quaestiones*:

> It is well known, however, that holy words have much effectiveness on natural things. For the natural philosophers say that the force of nature is concentrated above all in three things: in words and herbs, and in stones. We know something about the power of herbs and stones, but of the power of words we know little or nothing.
>
> It is said that only Solomon had this art of words, which now is thoroughly unknown to all men. Just as for instance some herbs have a certain effect on the human body and others [herbs] on others [bodies], likewise the sound of one element is naturally thought to have a certain effect toward a moving or changing regarding a particular thing, and the sound of another element regarding [the moving or changing of] others. And just as various herbs combined have a certain virtue in medicine that have none on their own, likewise multiple elements or multiple spoken words [combined] have a certain effect on temporal things if similarly some spoken combined [offered altogether] which would they would not have if offered individually. But it is not man who knows the virtue of the element but [rather] the art of combining words.
>
> By this art Solomon discovers exorcisms by which he binds demons and it is read to trap them in glass jars, and many other wonders/miracles in natural things by exorcisms. Likewise by this art Pharao's magicians were believed to make serpents/dragons from [their] staffs. If because he were to have a knowledge of this art and use it according to nature by not mixing in it the name or the authority of the demons, and would not use the art for illicit res or for secular baseness we believe that he would not sin, although he would seem to do miracles through such an art and neither would a doctor sin who predicts – according to the subtlety

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[90] Thomas studied in Paris, probably under Peter Cantor (who also writes about Solomon). For a list of the few known details about the life and activities of Thomas of Chobham, see: Fritz Kemmler, '*Exempla' in Context: A Historical and Critical Study of Robert Mannyng of Brunne's 'handlyng Synne,*'" (Tübingen: Narr, 1984) 35f.

[91] Before becoming a sub-dean in Salisbury, Chobham studied under Peter the Chanter in Paris. He is principally remembered for his influential *Summa Confessorum*, a treatise on penance, written in the aftermath of the 1215 Lateran Council. The treatise, which deals with the issue of commerce, profit and usury was long attributed to John of Salisbury.

> of this art – a future death to someone long before it came although this would seem miraculous to the ignorant.[92]

It is obvious from Chobham's description of Solomon's art that, far from being dismissed out of hand, the apocryphal Solomon narrative was a continued source of speculation, and one that still answered to present issues.

Twelfth century theologians did not doubt that Solomon had been able to compel demons. In fact, they had it on good authority – both the *Book of Wisdom* and Church tradition – that he had. It should also be apparent that this sort of speculation could potentially be of grave concern to the institutional Church, should it lose control over these rituals. Chobham's opinion that Solomon's lost art was not only very real but also potentially licit, from the perspective of canon law, was practically an invitation for the over-curious (and under-orthodox) to attempt to recover it. From such examples, moreover, it is apparent that the theologians' objections to such rituals – prior to the thirteenth century – were primarily to the misapplication of what were largely viewed as at least potentially legitimate techniques. Yet the tendency of such rituals to stray from the paths or orthodoxy in both execution and intent posed challenges to clerics and the institutional Church alike.[93]

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[92] The English translation is my own. The Latin original is from Patrick Hersperger, *Kirche, Magie und "Aberglaube": Superstitio in der Kanonistik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Köln: Böhlau, 2010) 384f., n 517. See also: Thomas of Chobham, *Summa Confessorum* (Louvin/Paris: hg. von F. Broomfield, 1968) 47f. as cited in Hersperger 384f.

[93] See, for example: Sophie Page, "Uplifting Souls: The Liber De Essentia Spiritum and the Liber Razielis," *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (University Park: Penn State Univ, 2015) 79-112, here 79. From Page's description of the two texts she treats in her article, it is clear how such rituals often placed themselves in direct competition with the functions of the institutional Church: "The *Liber de essentia spiritum* and the *Liber Razielis* are magic texts in which spiritual advancement is sought and undertaken by the practitioner. The descent of spirits to teach the practitioner or grant him celestial knowledge is linked in both texts with a corresponding ascent of the practitioner's soul while his body remains living. [...] While the rituals in these texts do not guarantee the soul's salvation, they do imply that those worthy to undertake the art will achieve it, and the texts give examples of those who have done so."

In the thirteenth century, however, Chobham's younger contemporary, William of Auvergne (c.1190-1249), took a view oppositional to Chobham's concerning the apocryphal Solomon narrative and "magic." In his *De Legibus* (1228-1230),[94] for instance, William firmly denies the possibility of a legitimate astrological magic, which seems to have been the prevalent theory of non-demonic magic at the time. He notes that the "idolatrous" cult of the stars distinguishes four kinds of magical figures: seals, rings, characters, and images,[95] but counters that characters, figures, impressions, and astrological images have no force unless they are tokens by which demons may recognize their worshippers.[96] As with Thomas Aquinas a generation later, William of Auvergne asserts that the effects of magic can only be achieved through the intervention of demons. Turning his attention to the apocryphal Solomon narrative specifically, William insists that there is no divinity in the angles of Solomon's pentacle (i.e. seal), for the true nature of the rings and seal of Solomon with their "execrable consecrations and detestable invocations" represents communication with demons. William's position demonstrates an obvious reversal of that of Peter Comestor as well as a rejection of the authority of Josephus' account of Eleazar and the ring yet it reflects a continued focus on the *formula* and the *rite*.

Like Thomas of Chobham had before him, William also takes up the possibility of compelling demons by means of words. It seems likely that the younger William of

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[94] Benedek Láng, *Unlocked Books: Manuscripts of Learned Magic in the Medieval Libraries of Central Europe* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 2010) 25.

[95] See: William of Auvergne's *De legibus* (Cap. 23, p. 65) in Guillaume d'Auvergne and Giovanni D. Trajano, *Guilielmi Alverni ... Opera Omnia ... Nunc Demum in Hac Psoteriori Editione ... Fide Integra Ad Authoris Sensum Recognita ... Per Joannem Dominicum Trajanum* (Venetiis: Ex Off. D. Zenari, 1591) as cited in Thorndike (351).

[96] See: Auvergne, *De legibus* (Cap. 27, pp. 86f.), as cited in Thorndike (352).

Auvergne would have been familiar with Thomas' *Summa Confessorum,* given that Thomas of Chobham had studied under Peter Cantor in Paris in the 1180s, where William was later bishop from 1228 until his death in 1249. Much as Thomas of Chobham had, William reasons that, in order for spoken words to have any efficacious virtue, they must derive it from either the material of which they are composed, air, or from their form, sound; or from what they signify. However, he does not entertain Thomas of Chobham's idea of Solomon's lost art of combining words for working wonders through some natural force of inherent to their sounds. Instead, William argues that air cannot kill unless it is poisoned by a plague, dragon, or toad, and that sound cannot kill, unless it is deafening. Yet he counters that what is signified by the word can be the cause: in this case, however, images, which are more exact likenesses, would be more powerful than words. Thus, William reasons that when sorcerers employ magic words and incantations, they call upon demons for aid, just as the worshipers of God sometimes induce Him to work wonders by calling upon his name.[97]

William presses this argument in a direct assault on two specific magical Solomonic texts that include magical images, which he names in chapter 27 of *De Legibus*:

> To this sort of idolatry belong those four figures which are called the *Rings of Solomon*, and a fifth which is called the *Seal of Solomon*, and nine others which are called the *Nine Scarabs*. The most execrable consecrations and most detestable invocations, writings, images in all these contain very evident impiety and idolatry. Let Christians not so much mention that unlawful image which is

[97] Thorndike 352.

> called the *Idea of Solomon*, nor that book which is called *Sacred* and its works, nor the figure which is called the *Mandal* or *Almandel* and its works.[98]

William seems to reason that the virtues attributed to such images are so excessive that they could belong only to God.[99] His position is clear, but his argumentative strategy is poor. He disapproves of incantations, and his suggestion that images would be more forceful than words is an attempt to implicate word magic in the sin of idolatry.

Overall, however, neither William's argument against astrological magic nor his argument against word magic provides anything more than a strongly worded theological opinion. He can only *assume* blasphemous and idolatrous execrations and demonic pacts on the part of the magician. Because of the rhetorical logic of his argument, William cannot prove guilt without actually witnessing a ritual, and thus fails to provide a satisfying argument for policing the circulation of ritual texts. Moreover, his arguments are confounded by the invocation of divine names and practices of purity in any magical practices based on the paradigmatic apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons. The weakness of his anti-magic theology compared to the later strategy of Aquinas is a problem of *corpus delicti* – no body, no crime.

It is crucial to note that William does not deny the efficacy (i.e. validity) of the magical acts to which he objects. This is all the more significant because William himself seems to feel that the names of God do indeed have some virtue not found in ordinary

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[98] Trithemius cites most of these in his *Antipalus*. See Peuckert: 48-51. The English translation given here is from Robert Mathiesen, "A Thirteenth-Century Ritual to Obtain the Beatific Vision from the Sworn Book of Honorius of Thebes," *Conjuring Spirits: Texts and Traditions of Medieval Ritual Magic* Ed. Claire Fanger (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 2015) 146.

[99] Thorndike paraphrases William's position thus: "So excessive are the virtues attributed to such images that they belong only to God, so that it is evident that God has been shorn of His glory which has been transferred to the figures" (351).

words and concedes – like Origen – that not only servants of God, but also even wicked men sometimes cast out demons by making use of holy exorcisms.[100] Furthermore, because in this way he grants the end but denies the means, he is in a rhetorically particularly weak position vis-à-vis the magician who claims to be able to compel demons through the power of divine names (i.e. the "holy names of God" familiar from Solomonic tradition).

Structurally, then, William's argument is disadvantageous because he focuses on what Malinowski has termed the *formula* rather than the *condition of the performer*: the bishop theologian of Paris is at an impasse. He simply attacks the intentions of the magicians who use the names of God "in working their diabolical marvels," but has provided for himself no outward evidence of the *condition of the performer* in his description of their activities. There is no apparent means of determining whether the actions of the magicians are blasphemous and execrable or "pure," as the magicians' ritual texts would seem to indicate. Thus, for the purposes of the present argument, it is significant that William's strategy represents a partial – but incomplete – shift of focus in the direction of the *condition of the performer*. William attacks the *condition of the performer*, but has given himself no way to determine whether the demonic intervention in the rituals he describes is achieved through the power of God to compel the demons (as described in texts of ritual magic) or through their willing cooperation in exchange for

[100] See Thorndike's discussion Auvergne's anti-magic argument. Thorndike observes that [William] censures the use of the name of God by 'magicians and astronomers' in 'working their diabolical marvels (*De legibus*, Cap 27, p. 89). However, he goes on to conclude that "In short, incantations possess no efficacy, but exorcisms do. This is an indication, not merely of William's logical inconsistency, but also of the existence of a Christian or ecclesiastical variety of magic in his day" (352). I do not agree with Thorndike's conclusion that William denies efficacy to incantations.

idolatrous worship (as William and other theologians claim). He simply denies the magicians' idea of purity but fails to demonstrate that they are, in fact, impure. "They forbid anyone who is not pure and clad in pure vestments to presume to touch the book in which this name is written," he writes, "but they try to gain evil ends by it and so blaspheme against their creator."[101] Thus, William's formulation does not succeed rhetorically in demonstrating the *condition of the performer*, but rather stops at an accusation concerning the intent behind the performer's actions – an accusation even less provable within his theory of magic than his assertions of the blasphemous and execrable nature of magic itself. Ultimately, then, William fails to wrest his focus from the *formula*. By accusing magicians of abusing purity, he acknowledges both its value and their success in achieving it as *condition of the performer*, while leaving the question of the liceity of demon compulsion in the Solomonic tradition essentially untouched.

By contrast, the impressive theological innovation of Thomas Aquinas in defining efficacious illicit magic as necessarily resulting from explicit or implicit demonic pact will be in providing one theory in which the requisite *condition of the performer* of illicit demon compulsion (i.e. *nigromantia*) is a form of "impurity" and another in which the requisite *condition of the performer* of licit demon (e.g. exorcism) is a form of "purity" mediated through the Church.[102] In this way, he brings all demon compulsion under

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[101] Thorndike 352.

[102] There is potentially some interesting work to be done involving Solomonic magic, demonology, and the University of Paris in terms of what Brian Stock describes as "textual communities" in his 1983 *The Implications of Literacy*. Consider: Peter Comestor was chancellor of the University of Paris – possibly the first. Thomas of Chobham studied at the University of Paris. William of Auvergne was professor of theology at University of Paris, and Aquinas was professor of theology at the University of Paris. This localization of the theological discourse on the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons and its relationship to ritual demon compulsion strengthens the case for significance of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in the definition of Catholic demonology. However, that work is

Church control. Why, though, was Aquinas brought to do this? I suggest that at least part of his motivations can be found historically, in a brief episode which seems to have thus far escaped the notice of scholars and which may – at least in part – have been instrumental in changing the Christian magic/anti-magic discourse during the Middle Ages.

The Christian Discovery of *Toledot Yeshu* (*Life of Jesus*)

As mentioned in the introduction to the present chapter, there appear to have been additional factors at work in Aquinas' introduction of purity as the presence-of-grace into his anti-magic theology –, factors beyond his concern about attempts at extra-ecclesial demon compulsion. We will return to an examination of the theological argument by which he develops this in his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66) in the following section.

First, however, we must return to the main line of the present project: Aquinas' redefinition of purity as presence-of-grace and its implications for (and facilitation of) the theological distinction between licit exorcism and illicit *nigromantia*. The critical factor that has not emerged in scholars' discussions of Aquinas' innovation is historical: it appears to coincide with a particular event in the history of Christian-Jewish relations in medieval Europe. This accusation came in the form of a polemical tract called the *Toledot Yeshu* (variously translated as *Life of Jesus, Generations of Jesus, etc.*), which appears to have come to the attention of the Dominicans at about the same time (1264-

outside the scope of this study. In the following section we turn our attention to possible influences from outside of Paris.

65) that Aquinas wrote his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66). The argument logic of the *Toledot Yeshu* hearkened back to the purity discourses of early Christianity's *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics and apologiae and issued a brazen denial of Jesus' divinity – an accusation of a fraud perpetrated by the Church and probably intended to undermine all of the authority of Christian teaching.

This section briefly traces the historical events that led up to Aquinas' writing his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*, including the discovery of the *Toledot Yeshu* by Dominicans, so that I can tie more explicitly Aquinas' work into this context and its particular instantiation of the narrative logics present in earlier discussions of Solomonic magic.

Dominican Scrutiny of Jewish Texts

The connection I propose between the *Toledot Yeshu* and Thomas Aquinas' *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* is framed within a larger context of the thirteenth century Catholic campaign against heresy and the question of whether Jewish teaching could be subjected to Catholic ecclesial authority. An instrumental part of that campaign was the founding of the Dominican Order.

After waging war with the heretical sects of the Waldensians and Catharites in Provence and Languedoc, Pope Innocent III (reigned 1198-1216) ordered the creation of the Dominican order for the purpose of preaching orthodoxy and prosecuting heresy. In 1216, the order was authorized by Innocent's successor, Pope Honorius III (reigned 1216-1227). However, with the Cathars and Waldenisians already defeated, the attention of the

fledgling order (which would eventually be the driving force behind the Inquisition) quickly turned to the content of Jewish teaching and learning, as another challenge to Christian orthodoxy and, by extension, Church authority. In 1232 the Dominicans burned the books of Maimonides in Montpelier, and in 1233, Pope Gregory IX (reigned 1227-1241) officially tried and condemned the Talmud as an offense to the truth of Christian teaching.[103] That condemnation rested on a historical logic: having been compiled long after the life of Jesus,[104] the Talmud contradicted the Christian claim that the validity of the Jewish religion had been superseded in Christianity.

The *Toledot Yeshu* appears to have come to the attention of the Church in the context of this scrutiny primarily intended for the Talmud. In 1239, a converted Jew named Nicholas Donin proposed a list of "heresies" in the Talmud. When Donin's list came to the attention of the Pope (Gregory IX), he, in turn, sought a theological response from William of Auvergne. William was professor of theology at the University of Paris (1220-1249) and the pope's appointee as bishop of Paris (1228-1249). The response that William gave the pontiff led to a papal bull ordering the confiscation of sacred books from synagogues in 1240, and to their burning in 1242.[105] Though William himself was not a Dominican – the order had been authorized only a few years before he became professor of theology at Paris in 1220 – he was supportive of the order. Thus, after his

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[103] Robert L. Chazan, John Friedman, and Jean Hoff, *The Trial of the Talmud: Paris, 1240* (Toronto: Pontifical Inst. of Mediaeval Studies, 2012) 1.

[104] The Jerusalem Talmud probably found its written form in the 4th century, as a record of oral arguments; the Babylonian Talmud comprises documentation from the third to fifth centuries.

[105] Neil Lewis, "William of Auvergne", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/william-auvergne/>.

death in 1249, the question of Jewish "heresy" naturally fell to the newly founded Dominicans.

In 1250, eight members of the Dominican order were selected by the provincial chapter, sitting in Toledo, to make a study of "oriental languages"[106] at a Dominican school which had been created for the express purpose of preparing its pupils to engage in polemics against Jews and Moors. In March, 1264, Raymond Martín (died after 1284), who was one of the eight, was commissioned, along with the Bishop of Barcelona, Raymund de Peñaforte, and two other Dominicans, Arnoldus de Sagarra and Petrus Janua, to examine the Hebrew manuscripts and books which the Jews, by order of the king, were to submit to them, and to cancel passages deemed offensive to the Christian religion.[107]

Though the *Toledot Yeshu* was not part of the Talmud and in no sense a canonical Jewish text, the Dominicans discovered and translated the Jewish anti-Christian tract during the course of their investigation. The text of the *Toledot Yeshu* recounts a story of how Jesus was only able to work his marvels by stealing and employing the *Shem ha-Mephorash* – the ineffable and efficacious name of God familiar from so many examples of the apocryphal Solomon narrative, including Solomonic ritual texts such as those condemned in William of Auvergne's *De Legibus*.[108] The *Toledot Yeshu* survives in

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[106] "Oriental" here most likely refers to both Hebrew and Arabic. Just as knowledge of Hebrew gave the Dominicans access to Jewish texts (for refuting), the latter allowed them to assess Islamic texts.

[107] Isidore Singer and Gotthold Weil, "Raymund Martín," *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (New York and London: Funk & Wagnall, 1905) 351f.

[108] For the authoritative study on the *Toledot Yeshu*, as well as translations of its many recensions, see: Michael Meerson, Peter Schäfer, Yaacov Deutsch, David Grossberg, Avigail Manekin, and Adina Yoffie. *Toledot Yeshu =: The Life Story of Jesus: Two Volumes and Database* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

Christian discourse from that period because it was included as a part of Raymond Martín's *Pugio Fidei* (*Dagger of Faith*). Yet while the *Pugio* itself was apparently not composed until ca. 1280, its contents, including Raymond's translation of the *Toledot* into Latin, represent the results of his earlier investigation, which began in 1264, before the date which scholars have assigned to the composition of *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66).

To tie this inquiry together with Aquinas is probably not possible without question. Based on current information, it is possible though not conclusive, that Aquinas became aware of the *Toledot Yeshu* before or as he was working on his *De Potentia*.[109] Even the most cursory reading of that text confirms that Aquinas' formulation of his anti-magic argument in *De Potentia* must have been informed by a familiarity with the depiction of Jesus as a *shem* magician in *Toledot Yeshu* (or its argument logic). Though it remains at the level of speculation that Aquinas was made aware of the contents of the *Toledot Yeshu* so soon after its discovery, as professor of theology at the University of Paris and particularly as a fellow Dominican, the speculation does not seem unfounded.

The speculation that Thomas Aquinas's formulation of his anti-magic theology was at least in part an indirect response to the accusations against the figure of Jesus in

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[109] Martín's *Pugio* had clearly reached Italy sometime before 1300 when Porchetus incorporated Martín's translation of the *Toledot Yeshu* into his *Victoria Porcheti adversos impios haebreos*. Scholar place Aquinas back in Italy since in 1259 serving as an advisor to the papal court and regent master of Dominicans in their course of studies until 1267. As advisor to the papal court, it seems likely that if the pope was made aware of the discovery of the *Toledot Yeshu* during that time that Aquinas was also. As master of Dominicans in studies there, he again conducted disputations like those in Paris, one of which was the *De Potentia*. There is some disagreement among scholars about the place and exact date of the composition of the text. According to Pierre Mandonnet, the disputations were written during Aquinas' stay at Anagni (1259-1261), but according to Martin Grabmann, they were written in Rome when Aquinas was regent of studies at the Priory of Santa Sabina (1265-67). Grabmann's chronology, which appears to be more favored among scholars, would allow for the Dominican discovery of the *Toledot Yeshu* to have influenced the content of Aquinas' *De Potentia*.

the *Toledot Yeshu* would seem further justified by the fact that Aquinas, who did not die until 1274, does not directly address the accusation of Jesus' having been a *shem* magician in any subsequent work. That lacuna suggests three different explanations: that Aquinas did not know about it at all, that he did not deem it worthy of response, or that he thought the indirect response in *De Potentia* sufficient. It seems unlikely, given his position in the Dominican order, that he would not have been aware of it by the time of his death, or that he was insensitive to the context in which the order explicitly invested its interest. After all, the purpose of the Dominican school of "oriental languages" in Toledo was apologetics and missionary work, not further prosecution, and Aquinas' anti-magic theology in *De Potentia* provides a very neat and timely solution to the rather significant problem in Christian apologetics which the *Toledot Yeshu* presented – he closes the loop on the theological questions in a way that would have supported Martín's apologetics and mission work.

The value of this last hypothesis is that it would implicate medieval Catholic *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics in Aquinas' formulation of the purity as presence-of-grace during the first years of the composition of the *Summa Theologia* (written 1265-1274). In other words, the Scholastic Catholic formulation of grace may have been devised – at least in part – in response to the trope of Solomon's power over demons once the figure of Jesus stood accused of that type of magic.[110]

[110] Furthermore, such findings would fit with the late antique formulation of "purity" as absence-of-contamination – the contamination of Christianity with Jewish teachings and practices, as we have already discussed. At the other end of the period, with the early modern *contra-iudaeos* mobilization of the *Toledot Yeshu* in Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* (see chapter 4), this formulation also presents Judaism as a source of contamination and idolatrous magic.

Nonetheless, the primary basis for the speculation that Aquinas was aware of and responding to the Jewish polemic against Jesus in the *Toledot Yeshu* is that his formulation of grace-as-purity effectively renders the allegations of Jesus' having been a *shem* magician false by reason of impossibility. To wit: the *Quaestio* in which Aquinas addresses the apocryphal Solomon narrative poses the question of whether demons may be controlled by "sensible means." Sensible means here, includes words (and therefore, presumably also the name of God), and Aquinas concludes that demons are *not* compelled by "sensible means." Jesus could not have been a *shem* magician, not because of any direct evidence (Aquinas could not prove the negative), but rather because as "sensible means," not even the name of God has the power to compel demons absent grace-as-purity. Let us look into these formulations in greater detail.

The Turning Point: Purity as the Presence-of-Grace in *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*

As the previous sections suggests, Aquinas' intervention not only continues an on-going Church project, but also, I believe, represents a turning point in Christian magic/anti-magic discourse. At about the same time that Thomas Aquinas began his magisterial *Summa Theologia* (1265-1274), the medieval Scholastic and Dominican had already started working out the demonology that undergirded his anti-magic theology in the much shorter *De Potentia* (1265-1266). While the demonology of his *Summa Theologia* is expanded, it is not fundamentally changed. One conspicuous difference significant for the present argument, however, is the absence of any mention of Solomon

in the later work's demonology. By contrast, *De Potentia* contains a direct reference the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's ability to compel demons, familiar from the Talmud, the Quran, and Christian apocrypha. This difference is significant not because Solomon played a particularly prominent role in Aquinas' original argument, but rather because these passages support the persistence of the narrative logics of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's authority over demons. Aquinas' use of the folklore concerning the First Temple builder's power over demons allowed him to accomplish a primary turn in Church organization, in terms of delineating and prohibiting extra-ecclesial demon compulsion in medieval Christianity. It is also significant because of context of the accusations of the *Toledot Yeshu* about Jesus.

One of the arguments Aquinas proposes in support of the thesis – only to refute it along with all the others – is the apocryphal reference to Solomon: "It is related of Solomon that he performed certain exorcisms and thereby compelled demons to quit bodies that were obsessed by them."[111] Again, in the later *Summa*, Thomas refrains from relying on the example of Solomon – at least from referring to him by name –, but the argument he ultimately constructs in both is this: *formulae* alone will not suffice to compel demons, and Aquinas assumes demonic intervention as the only means by which the effects of magic are achievable. It is not possible to compel demons by sensible means, including words – even the name(s) of God, an assertion that explicitly invalidates earlier forms of the arguments about demon compulsion (in which the names God can indeed be used to compel them). Aquinas turns away from the *formula* of the

[111] Aquinas, *De Potentia,* Q 6, A 10.

ritual to the *condition of the performer*. It is possible to compel demons by the *power* of God (as we are told Solomon did) when one is in a state of grace (*in statu salutis*), but not possible when one in a state of sin.[112] Thus, Aquinas has equated the authorization to perform the ritual (*condition of the performer*) with purity as the presence-of-grace.

Obviously, purity as presence-of-grace the way Aquinas uses it, represents a significant departure from any Jewish perspective, as well as away from the apparent related idea within Christian antiquity of purity as absence-of-idolatry. It also represents a distinct move to affirm a more abstract, theological approach to resolving this debate. Where ancient Judaism conceived of purity as the absence-of-contamination or defilement – most notably through idolatry (this, according to Jacob Neusner in *The Idea of Purity in Ancient Judaism*) –,[113] the lapsarian theology of medieval Christianity assumes defilement as the *de facto* state of humanity inherited through the Fall of Adam (in other words "original sin") and conceives of purity as the presence-of-grace gained through participation in the sacraments within the institutional Church.

However, Aquinas' move also departs from late antique and previous medieval Christian perspectives. Origen (c.184-c.254) and William of Auvergne maintained that "wicked men" and non-believers could compel demons in the name of Jesus – the *formula* simply needed to be the correct one. While purity as *condition of the performer*

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[112] In *De Potentia,* Q 6, A 10, Aquinas writes: "Should anyone say that they are compelled by the power of God: I reply, on the contrary, that to compel the demons by (calling upon) the power of God is the effect of the gift of grace whereby the order of heavenly powers is fulfilled. Now this gift is not in unbelievers and wicked men like sorcerers. Therefore neither can the demons be compelled by invoking the divine power." Aquinas' Latin reads: "Sed dicendum, quod coguntur virtute divina. Respondio; Sed contra, cogere Daemones ex virtute divina est per donum gratiae, quo perficitur ordo caelestium potestatum. Hoc autem donum gratiae non adest infidelibus, et hominibus sceleratis quales sunt magi. Ergo nec etiam virtute divina Daemones cogere possunt."

[113] Neusner and Douglas, 1.

does not appear to be explicit in Origen's commentary on Matthew 26:63, its association with demon compulsion is ubiquitous elsewhere in the writings of the ancient Mediterranean world. Likewise, in the writings of William of Auvergne, the condition is made explicit as something distinct from grace. It is not until the anti-magic theology of Thomas Aquinas that we find a clear articulation of the presence-of-grace *as* "purity" in his formulation of the *condition of the performer* in the Christian discourse of demon compulsion.

Let us now turn more explicitly to how Aquinas' formulation of purity as presence-of-grace combines with his reference to the apocryphal Solomon narrative in his *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei*. As we shall see, it first allows him to create a distinction between licit exorcism and illicit *nigromantia* on the basis of the *condition of the performer* where his predecessors (such as William of Auvergne) had sought to find fault with the *formula* or the *rite*. Second, comparison of Aquinas' framing of his *Quaestio* with the polemical accusation against Jesus in the *Toledot Yeshu*, which had come to the attention of the Dominicans one or two years before, shows how the two texts may be seen to form a dialogue.

"Disputed Questions" as Practice and Genre: New Text Forms for Old (Solomonic) Narrative Materials

Thomas Aquinas composed four comprehensive theological treatises concerning God, the universe, and mankind. The *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* (1265-66), with which we are concerned, falls roughly in the middle of those efforts. The earliest of

the large-scale works was his *Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum* (Commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard) written 1252-56, followed by his *Summa contra Gentiles* (*Summa Against the Pagans*) from 1261-63. His best-known work, the massive *Summa Theologia* (1265-73), was begun at roughly the same time as *De Potentia*, but not finished until much later. Finally, his *Compendium Theologiae ad Fratrem Reginaldum Socium Suum Carissimum* (*Compendium of Theology*) was written much later, ca. 1273, near the end of his life in 1274.

While thematically of a piece with these larger works insofar as it is concerned with the power and nature of God, the *Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia Dei* is nevertheless distinct from the others in that it belongs to a body of treatises on particular topics which were composed in a different manner. All of Aquinas' "Disputed Questions" are models for – and potentially at least partially records of – public disputations, taking the form of arguments intended to convince particular audiences. As such, Aquinas may be understood as the editor as much as he might the author of the various collections of "disputed questions" of which *De Potentia* appears to be the earliest.[114] As a practice, "disputed questions" were an integral part of the Scholastic program of theological study, and during his first tenure at the University of Paris (1256-59) as professor of theology, Aquinas frequently held the disputations for which the *Quaestiones* are named. Under Aquinas' direction, two mornings every other week were set aside for public disputations

[114] These include: Disputed Questions on Spiritual Creatures "*Quaestiones disputatae se spiritualibus creaturis*" (1266-69), Disputed Questions on Evil "*Quaestiones disputatae de malo*" (1269-72), Disputed Questions on the Virtues "*Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus*" (1269-72), Disputed Questions on the Immortality of the Soul "*Quaestiones disputatae de immortalitate anime*" (uncertain date), and Disputed Questions on the Soul "*Quaestiones disputatae de Anima*" (1267).

during term, and regular lectures suspended. Such disputations were recorded. Each article in the *Disputed Questions* is thus (potentially) a formalized record of a disputation (or perhaps an intended model for such disputations) and the articles in the longest series of disputations were grouped together into questions.

The form of the disputations is reflected in the structure of the recorded texts. First, in advance of the disputation, a master of theology proposed a thesis. Article 10 of Quaestio 6 provides us with a convenient example: "Whether demons are compelled by sensible means, […] and it would seem that they are." On the first day, a bachelor defended the thesis under the direction of a master. The audience, which consisting of masters, bachelors, students, and attendants, challenged the thesis, while the bachelor cited authorities in its defense.[115] It is in this context that we find the reference to Solomon's authority over demons in Q 6, A 10 of *De Potentia*:

> It is related of Solomon that he performed certain exorcisms and thereby compelled the demons to quit bodies that were obsessed by them. Therefore demons can be compelled by adjuration.[116]

Today, the role of the bachelor seems counterintuitive, as he was effectively tasked with staving off an orthodox resolution as long as possible. The practice, however, served to expose as many counterarguments as possible to the inevitable statement of orthodoxy with which the presiding master concludes the first day's proceedings. On the second morning, the presiding master summarizes the points raised on the previous occasion in order, citing proof of the thesis and rational argument. Aquinas counters and resolves the

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[115] Tomás de Aquino and Richard J. Regan, *The Power of God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) xvii.
[116] Aquinas, *De Potentia*, Q 6, A 10.

previous day's Solomon example, which was offered in support of the validity of demon compulsion by sensible means, in his *Reply to the Third Objection*:

> If Solomon performed these exorcisms when he was in a state of grace, they could derive the power to compel the demons from the power of God. But if it was after he had turned to the worship of idols, so that we have to understand that he performed them by magic arts, these exorcisms had no power to compel the demons, except in the manner explained above [i.e. demonic pact].[117]

The "replies to objections" in disputed questions are as important as the resolution itself because they address apparent contradictions or exceptions. Thus, without the "reply to the third objection" – and its explicit reference to the canonical account of Solomon's fall from grace, even Aquinas would seem to have recognized the insufficiency of his *Quaestio* to address the practice of "Solomonic" demon compulsion.

Certain points concerning the context of "Disputed Questions" in general and, Article 10 of Question 6 in particular, bear mentioning. To begin with, the disputations that gave rise to Aquinas' various collections of disputed questions are oriented toward students as pedagogical material. For that reason, "disputed questions" might also fruitfully be translated as "questions for disputation." Furthermore, the disputed nature of the questions does not refer to an unresolved status in Church teaching, but rather to conflicts or "apparent contradictions" among authorities. The practice of disputation was thus a form of instruction in arriving at orthodox conclusions in the face of contradicting authorities and not a series of unresolved theological questions. With respect to Article 6, this, in turn, allows us to conclude that the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over

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[117] Aquinas, *De Potentia* Q 6, A 10, ad 3: "Ad tertium dicendum, quod si Salomon exorcismos suos eo tempore fecit quando erat in statu salutis, potuit esse in illis exorcismis vis cogendi Daemones ex virtute divina. Si autem tempore illo fecit quo idola adoravit, ut intelligatur eum per magicas artes fecisse, non fuit in illis exorcismis vis cogendi Daemones, nisi modo praedicto."

demons was widely considered authoritative enough to warrant specific attention and refutation by virtue of its inclusion in the disputation among the conflicting authorities. Moreover, because Aquinas refers to it in a pedagogical work (whether as author or editor), we may further conclude that he regarded Solomon's apocryphal reputation as either assumed or necessary knowledge on the part of the students.[118]

De Potentia Quaestio 6 (Miracles), Article 10

Quaestio 6, Article 10 of *De potentia Dei* reads: "The tenth point of inquiry is whether demons by sensible and corporeal objects, deeds, or words, be forced to work the miracles that seem to be wrought by magic: and seemingly they can." Overtly, Aquinas is debating the possibility of the compulsion of demons. Covertly, he has raised, but not addressed, the question of how magic works: "the miracles that *seem* to be wrought by magic." Aquinas is arguing off in two directions at once. Over the course of his *Quaestio*, he argues the former and simply concludes the latter without debate. For our purposes, what is most significant is the theologian's framing of the question: Can demons be compelled by sensible and corporeal objects, deeds, or words?

The framing of the *Quaestio* is significant not only to previously unresolved concerns over the natural properties of speech (e.g. Thomas of Chobham's speculations)

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[118] There is potentially some interesting work to be done in terms of textual communities. Peter Comestor was (possibly the first) chancellor of the University of Paris. Thomas of Chobham studied at the University of Paris. William of Auvergne was professor of theology at University of Paris, and Aquinas was professor of theology at the University of Paris. That work is outside the scope of this study. However, it suffices for the present to say that the fact that the localization of the theological discourse on the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons and its relationship to ritual demon compulsion (if anything) strengthens the case for significance of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in the definition of Catholic demonology. In the following section we turn our attention to possible influences from outside of Paris.

and the efficacy of the symbols and suffumigations of astrological magic (e.g. William of Auvergne's case against Solomonic magic), but also related to the accusations raised against the figure of Jesus in the *Toledot Yeshu*, which were discussed in the previous section. According to the *Toledot Yeshu*, Jesus stole a "sensible" word – a name. Granted, that particular word was the allegedly efficacious and ineffable name of God, but a word nonetheless and Aquinas makes no allowances or exceptions in the formulation of his question. The fact that the ancient apologists and William of Auvergne had explicitly made such exceptions strongly suggests that Aquinas' failure to do so – even for the name of God – was intentional, possibly for the purpose of avoiding a potentially contentious issue. Like Thomas of Chobham and William of Auvergne, Aquinas poses the question of whether demons are compelled by words, but unlike them, he concludes that this is not possible. Moreover, he does this not by attempting to negate the *formula* and *rite*, but by subordinating them to the *condition of the performer*, as we will further address.

Some of the significance of the framing of Aquinas' *Quaestio* has been remarked upon by Francis Young, for instance, who observes:

> Aquinas was in a difficult position: on the one hand, he was inclined to argue that the exorcisms of Christ rather than the exorcisms of Solomon should be the pattern for Christian exorcisms, but on the other hand the liturgical exorcisms of the church did not resemble Christ's straightforward dispossessions in the Gospel, and took a highly ritualized form.[119]

However, it is our contention here that Young's analysis, while perceptive of the bind in which Aquinas found himself, fails to discern the broader dynamics reflected in the *Toledot Yeshu*'s accusation that Jesus was a *shem* magician and the pervasiveness of

[119] Francis Young, *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity* (Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 71.

"magical" applications of exorcistic logic at the time. In other words, Young misses the fact that Aquinas' primary challenge was not in the fact that medieval Church exorcisms did *not* resemble the "straightforward dispossessions of the Gospel." Quite the contrary!

While the exorcisms of the medieval Church may have outwardly borne little resemblance to the exorcisms of the Gospel (and, in fact, may have borne more resemblance to Solomonic demon compulsion), they were functionally all too similar to Gospel exorcisms in the lack of hegemonic restriction to their authorization. Aquinas' challenge was one of policing the *authorization* of exorcism. In order to do that, he defined *nigromantia* – finally succeeding where his predecessors had failed in delineating a category that would be the opening for whole new generations of theologians, clergy, and laity interested in religious authorization for religious ritual, but also the nature of causality in the physical world generally. Where the apologists of the ancient Church had denied the efficacy of Solomonic methods, Aquinas concedes at least the possibility of efficacy, but only *by impure means*.

Aquinas' solution accomplished two things. First, and most obviously, on the basis of the *condition of the performer* he forced a distinction between licit, *ecclesiastically* approved, demon compulsion as exorcism and *nigromantia*, as unapproved and illicit demon compulsion. The second thing he accomplishes, I would argue, is intentionally couched in terms that imply a clear intent: his formulation of the "physics" of demon compulsion works to invalidate the accusations against Jesus in the *Toledot Yeshu*, rendering them false *by reason of impossibility*. Without addressing the *Toledot Yeshu* directly, Aquinas "proves" that Jesus could not have been a *shem*

magician. By arguing this way, he avoids the weak position of attempting to prove a negative – namely, that Jesus did *not* work his wonders by means of a stolen *shem*. Instead, by demonstrating that the effects of magic are wrought by demons and demons are not compelled by objects, deeds, or words – and, in a departure from the arguments of his theological predecessors since Christian antiquity –, he does not make an exception for the name of God. Thus, by implication, if Jesus accomplished any miracles at all, they would have to have been either by divine power as the Messiah or by means of demonic pact. The former position is orthodox, and the latter is clearly heretical. In this way, too, Aquinas effectively abolishes any grey areas, leaving no possibility for a licit "magic".

The point to underscore about his logic is this: Aquinas combined the then well-known apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power to compel demons with the canonical account of the monarch's late-in-life fall to idolatry (as recounted in 1 Kings 11) to create an air-tight argument against the then rapidly increasing amount of ritual demon compulsion attributed to Solomon. By framing the thesis of article VI in terms of "sensible means," Aquinas has effectively included operative premise of virtually every species of magic known to medieval Christians. His inclusion of not just words, but also physical objects, in turn, addresses (without specifically naming) the exorcistic instructions given by the angel Raphael to Tobit in the *Book of Tobit*,[120] the Ring of

[120] See "Raphael's Instructions" in the deuterocanonical book of Tobit 6:7-8: "Afterward the two of them traveled on together till they drew near to Media. Then the young man asked the angel this question: 'Brother Azariah, what medicine is in the fish's heart, liver, and gall?' He answered: "As for the fish's heart and liver, if you burn them to make smoke in the presence of a man or a woman who is afflicted by a demon or evil spirit, any affliction will flee and never return" The New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE).

Solomon, the mysterious root which Josephus references in connection with the ring "of the sort mentioned by Solomon" in the Eleazar story, and other allegedly powerful object.

Moreover, by including "deeds" and "words" as sensible means, Aquinas includes what Malinowski has identified as *rite* and *formula*. All of the "seals, rings, characters, and images" that William of Auvergne and his predecessors tried to address separately (as well as anything unanticipated in these categories), Aquinas is able to cover with "sensible means." Of Malinowski's tripartite division of magic, Aquinas leaves only the *condition of the performer* as a possible means of compelling demons, which as we have seen, is the basis for his argument against Solomon as exorcist. In Aquinas' model, the Solomonic narrative elements still require individual attention, but not as potential author of legitimate "magic." Rather, the story launched in Aquinas' text addresses the apocryphal narrative of Solomon specifically as a possible exception – a nod, perhaps, to the older disputes in the tradition that balance the roles of Jesus and Solomon against each other.

This argument logic of the third objection and his response to it is noteworthy for a few reasons. We repeat them here in dialogue:

> *Third Objection* It is related of Solomon that he performed certain exorcisms and thereby compelled the demons to quit bodies that were obsessed by them. Therefore demons can be compelled by adjuration.[121]
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> *Response to Third Objection* If Solomon performed these exorcisms when he was in a state of grace, they could derive the power to compel the demons from the power of God. But if it was after he had turned to the worship of idols, so that we have to understand that he performed them by magic arts, these exorcisms had no

[121] Aquinas, *De Potentia* Q 6, A 10: "Praeterea, de Salomone legitur, quod quosdam exorcismos fecit quibus Daemones cogebantur ut ex obsessis corporibus recederent. Ergo per adiurationes Daemones cogi possunt."

> power to compel the demons, except in the manner explained above [i.e. demonic pact].[122]

First, Aquinas seems to equate exorcism and magic, but he does so *because he has defined their relations of sameness and difference*. Second, having chosen an example from an apocryphal tradition over numerous possible canonical examples of exorcism, he concludes no more than "Therefore demons can be compelled by adjuration." Thus, according to Aquinas, all "magic" is the result of demonic intervention and can only be achieved through either explicit or implicit pact with the intervening demons: in other words, to achieve the effects of magic necessitates idolatry, which is a sin, an impurity which can only be purified by obtaining grace through the sacraments. Because he and most orthodox theologians after him define magic in these terms, it becomes perforce impossible to practice magic in a state of grace (i.e. purity). Grace is required to compel demons, but grace is lost through sin, and so the only possible *condition of the performer* for a "magician" is sin – impurity as absence-of-grace.

Thomas Aquinas wins his argument, then, by introducing a paradox. His explanation continues to allow for church-sanctioned exorcism, as well as for miracles in general,[123] while effectively forbidding any other demon compulsion. In fact, then, it is Aquinas' distinction that effectively creates licit exorcism as something distinct from

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[122] Aquinas, *De Potentia* Q 6, A 10, ad 3: "Ad tertium dicendum, quod si Salomon exorcismos suos eo tempore fecit quando erat in statu salutis, potuit esse in illis exorcismis vis cogendi Daemones ex virtute divina. Si autem tempore illo fecit quo idola adoravit, ut intelligatur eum per magicas artes fecisse, non fuit in illis exorcismis vis cogendi Daemones, nisi modo praedicto."

[123] See especially: *De* Potentia, Q 6, A 9. In the introduction to the 2012 edition, Regan summarizes article 9: "Saints rightly disposed can also instrumentally work miracles by their prayers and power, even faith without charity congruously merits that one's petition for a miracle be heard, although charity is the foundation of meriting (A. 9)." See: Tomás de Aquino and Richard J. Regan, *The Power of God* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) xxi.

magic, thereby maintaining the salient elements of Solomonic narratives on demon compulsion, while virtually foreclosing it outside the boundary of Church supervision.

Aquinas rejects the old theory of magic, which was contested between Church and magicians, and replaces it with *two distinct* new ones. Moreover, he actually strikes at the allusive potential (*unio magica*) of the figure of Solomon.

Grace-as-Purity in *De Potentia Dei*

The claims I have just made are straightforwardly bolstered in examining the rhetorical framing of the Thomas Aquinas' argument against the possibility of demon compulsion "by sensible means," as in the *De Potentia Dei* (Q VI, A. 10), a move with profound implications both for medieval theology and for modern scholarship. Here, again, Malinowski is a useful reference point, with his emphasis on the *condition of the performer* rather than the *formula* or *rite*. Using this distinction, Aquinas is able effectively to create "magic" (illicit demon compulsion) as its own discourse, distinct from Church-approved (i.e. Church-controlled) exorcism (i.e. licit demon compulsion). Yet this analysis bears on modern scholarship insofar as it contradicts Malinowski's observation that the *formula* is the most important of the three aspects of "magic." From the theological side, it begins to account for the process of the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" as an inevitable consequence of the renegotiation of authority within the hegemonic structures of competing theological communities.

With regard to medieval theology, our analysis also shows that Aquinas' definition of magic was rhetorically quite effective. Indeed, his explanation of "magic" as

demonic intervention achievable only through an explicit or implicit demonic pact still represents the official teaching of the Catholic Church.[124] Yet despite its rhetorical stability, Aquinas' intervention appears to have had little practical effect on stemming the medieval tide of the sort of ritual demon compulsion that has come to be called "Solomonic" magic. As we have shown, several of Thomas' contemporaries and successors collectively cite numerous grimoires attributed to Solomon as illicit texts. Yet while Aquinas clearly did not succeed in eradicating "Solomonic magic," he did have a tremendous impact on the subsequent demonology of the Middle Ages and early modern era by forcing a distinction between licit demon compulsion (as exorcism) and illicit demon compulsion as *nigromantia*. Moreover, his development of grace-as-purity not only impacted anti-magic theological discourse, but also magical discourse as well. This is reflected in post-Aquinas ritual magic (or post-Aquinas recensions of pre-Aquinas texts) that incorporate the obtaining of sacramental grace into the preparations necessary for the magician in achieving a pure *condition of the performer*.

The idea of the demonic pact was not Aquinas' innovation. Like Augustine before him, Aquinas reasoned that any and all magic was necessarily the result of a demonic pact since the effects of "magic" were only achievable through demonic intervention. Yet

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[124] See: "Divination and Magic" in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "2116 All forms of *divination* are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone. 2117 All practices of *magic* or *sorcery*, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others - even if this were for the sake of restoring their health - are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible. *Spiritism* often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another's credulity" (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2008) 213f., here #2116 and #2117.

unlike Augustine, Aquinas succeeded in establishing the inevitability of the demonic pact as the only possible explanation for any extra-ecclesial efficacious ritual.[125] What had previously been open to debate, as in William of Auvergne's argument – the unknowability of the magician's state of grace (i.e. purity) –, was resolved as sin (i.e. impurity) in Aquinas. If nothing else, the magician had sinned in his pursuit of something that the Church in its wisdom had forbidden. This allowed Aquinas to conclude that, in such a state of sin, the power of God could not be available to the magician. Moreover, Aquinas used the apocryphal Solomon narrative to argue his point.

The part of the argument that Aquinas opens to debate in the *Quaestio* concerns *how* – under what circumstances – demons might be compelled. His inclusion of article 10 of *Quaestio* 6 in *Disputed Questions on the Power of God* is thus significant. The thesis, as he initially frames it, would seem not to pertain to the "power of God" at all. He writes, "The tenth point of inquiry is whether demons by sensible and corporeal objects, deeds, or words, [might] be forced to work the miracles that seem to be wrought by magic: and seemingly they can." The power of God is by definition not "sensible means," but this is part of the strategy of Aquinas' argument and an effect of the rhetorical structure of disputed questions that begin "*videtur…*" (it would seem), and conclude "*sed contra…*" (but to the contrary). Aquinas intends to refute the proposition – for this is how

[125] For some discussion of the inevitability of the demonic pact in the anti-magic theology ("systematic magiology") of Thomas Aquinas, see: Thomas Linsenmann, *Die Magie bei Thomas von Aquin* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011), here 330f. Linsemann writes, "Jede Magische Handlung, dies sei vorausgeschickt, ist sündhaft. Dies liegt im Wirken der Dämonen begründet, das die Grundbedingung dafür ist, daß Magie vorliegt. Magie kann aus dem Werk Thomas von Aquins definiert werden als der Versuch des Menschen, Dinge zu erfahren oder zu bewirken, die zu erfahren oder zu bewirken ihm auf naturgemäße Weise nicht möglich ist. Daher nimmt er seine Zuflucht zu den Dämonen. Dies geschieht einerseits auf indirekte und meist unbewußte Weise, indem er sein Ziel durch die Anwendung von Mitteln zu erreichen sucht, die dafür völlig ungeeignet sind. Dadurch wird eine eitle Handlung vollzogen, die den Dämonen Gelegenheit gibt, sich einzumischen: Ein *pactum tacitum* entsteht. Auf direkte Weise dagegen geschieht die Hinwendung zu den Dämonen, indem der Mensch sie anruft: Ein *pactum expressum* entsteht."

disputed questions are presented – that demons are compelled by sensible means, and he wishes to conclude "to the contrary" that they are only compelled by the power of God.

There is another interesting feature to his argument that concerns us. The inclusion of the example of Solomon's exorcisms as they were widely known through the medieval traditions of Solomonic magic implicates the power of the *name* of God in the hands of illicit actors, which Aquinas seeks to limit, without limiting the power of God himself. Though this connection is not made explicit in the disputed question, it represents another logical and clearly implied connection between the apocryphal narrative and the *Potentia Dei* (i.e. "power of God"). Moreover, it bears mention that Aquinas does not debate *whether* the effects of magic are achievable by any means other than demonic pact. This latter rhetorical move is instrumental to his argument. If Aquinas were to allow that the effects of magic were achievable by other means (such as the astrological sympathies that William of Auvergne denies or the natural qualities of speech considered by Thomas of Chobham), then his argument would simply not hold. Furthermore, by only considering the effects of magic as achievable through demonic pact, Aquinas is able to leverage the canonical example of Solomon's idolatry (i.e. impurity) and his own conclusions about authority over demons as a gift of grace as universally significant.

The importance of Aquinas' focus on the inherited narrative material for the purpose of manipulating the *condition of the performer* as "pure" in his theory of magic (i.e. implicit or explicit pact with interceding demons) logically follows from his explanation of miracles in the previous article (Q 6, A 10). There, he concludes that,

"saints rightly disposed can also instrumentally work miracles by their prayers and power, and even faith without charity congruously merits that one's petition for a miracle be heard, although charity is the foundation of meriting."[126] The difference between miracle and magic for Aquinas is thus in the *condition of the performer*: saints are pure, enjoying the favor of god, but magicians are not. The ingenuity of Aquinas' solution is that he creates two separate discourses: one that is efficacious *because it is pure*, and another that is efficacious *because it is impure*. The impure discourse had been the stumbling block for so many of his predecessors. The ancient fathers clearly saw only one discourse when they argued that demons obeyed when compelled in the name of Jesus and did not obey otherwise (e.g. when compelled in the name of Solomon or by his *formulae*). William of Auvergne likewise struggled – unable to separate purity and demonic intervention. Only in Aquinas do we at least find a clear theory in which the efficacy of *magic* is defined by impurity and a distinct theory of miracle defined by a form of "purity" firmly in the control of the institutional Church. Thus, he is able to conclude that saints are rightly disposed when they work miracles and, by contrast, magicians are wrongly disposed for miracles but rightly disposed for "magic." The difference in the *condition of the performer* is the presence or absence of grace-as-purity. Since Aquinas has established that grace is only obtainable through the Church, it thus follows that purity is only obtainable within the Church. Thus, extra-ecclesial demon compulsion must be graceless and therefore *de facto* involve demonic pact.

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[126] The quote is the summary of Article 9 from the introduction in: Richard J. Regan, *Power of God: By Thomas Aquinas* (Cary: Oxford University Press, USA, 2014) xxi.

CHAPTER 3:

THE SOLOMON NARRATIVE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY: OVERT VERSUS IMPLIED

During the sixteenth century, discourse on the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's authority over demons became polyphonic. On the one hand, the medieval Scholastic instrumentalization of the narrative continued overtly – though gradually waning. It still cropped up into the seventeenth century, for instance, in the *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex* (*Magical Investigation in Six Books*, 1599-1600) of Spanish Jesuit, Martín Del Rio (1551-1608). On the other, it appears to be absent from both Renaissance humanist and Protestant theological discourse. We will argue here for its continuing presence, albeit in implicit and allusive forms.

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that the apocryphal Solomon narrative and its influence on theological constructs of licit and illicit demon compulsion

– including the significance of "purity" as the requisite *condition of the performer* – were not simply abandoned as some artifact of the "Catholic Middle Ages" as a result of humanist and Protestant reforms. It argues, instead, that the narrative merely became necessarily covert – implied – in response to a combination of pressures on the authors of a number of *published* Renaissance magico-philosophical and magico-theological texts. This in turn allows for new readings of certain texts that have long puzzled scholars – Johannes Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494) in this chapter, and Martin Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) in the following one.

This chapter is not primarily concerned with the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity." Rather, it digresses – necessarily – from this project's strict longitudinal orientation. In the following chapter, discussion will return to the subject of "purity" and reveal Luther's responses to both magical and non-magical encounters with the devil (demons), to involve "faith-as-purity" as the requisite *condition of the performer*. However, in order to facilitate the next phase of the study in the following chapter, which demonstrates two distinct (early and late) anti-magic theological strategies in the writings of Martin Luther, both of which respond to the apocryphal Solomon narrative, it is first necessary to trace the continued instrumentalization of the narrative in humanist magico-theological discourse during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

While the work of the present chapter is primarily that of preparing for the argument in the following chapter, it nevertheless offers a unique contribution to scholarship with a new reading of an early theological text by a pillar of the Northern

Renaissance, Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522). Here, we argue that Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* (*Concerning the Wonderworking Word*, 1494) was in fact likely to have been influenced by the *Liber Razielis*, a Latin translation of a Hebrew manual of ritual Solomonic demon compulsion (*Sepher Raziel)* that Reuchlin is known to have owned and read. This reading contradicts and resolves multiple disparate readings of *De Verbo Mirifico* currently represented in the scholarship. In demonstrating the influence of the *Liber Razielis* on Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*, we not only prepare to identify Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) as the full and final articulation of his anti-magic theology, but also to connect both Luther and Reuchlin to the apocryphal Solomon narrative and the implications of its attendant *condition of the performer* as "purity."

This chapter proceeds in three sections. The first will demonstrate the ubiquity of the apocryphal Solomon narrative during late medieval and early modern eras in connection with magic as demon compulsion in *non-published* anonymous sources and offer an interpretation as to the significance of the comparative lack of references to it in sixteenth century published works. The second identifies and traces those references and allusions to the apocryphal Solomon narrative persisting in humanist magico-theological discourse in order to reveal what is at stake in Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*. The third and final section of this chapter briefly compares Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* with the *Liber Razielis* in order to reveal similarities between the operative assumptions of the rituals described in the two texts (i.e. *formula*, *rite*, and *condition of the performer*). It will also clarify Reuchlin's engagement both with "purity" as *condition of the performer* and with the ineffable and efficacious name of God (i.e. *Shem ha-Mephorash* or

Tetragrammaton) as *formula* in the Malinowskian tripartite paradigm that this study follows.

Demonstrating the connection of Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* with the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons, in turn, will facilitate our following reading of Luther's anti-magic theology not only as anti- popular (Solomonic) magic, but also as indicative of his having turned against humanist thinkers whom he had previously supported (e.g. Reuchlin and Pico della Mirandola).[1]

The Apocryphal Solomon Narrative in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Eras

As indicated above, the apocryphal Solomon narrative which forms the meridian for our study outwardly appears not to have been carried over from the Scholastic discourse on "magic" into humanist magico-theological and Lutheran anti-magical discourses. Overt references to the wise Solomon's apotropaic powers almost never appear in humanist or Lutheran theological texts, yet one finds frequent mention of the efficacious name(s) of God, the content of his wisdom.

Thus, this section begins the present chapter's work of uncovering the apocryphal narrative as covert and implied (rather than absent) in humanist and Lutheran discourses by first demonstrating its pervasiveness in the preceding and coeval Catholic magic/anti-magic discourse of the late medieval and early modern eras. We begin in this way –

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[1] Erika Rummel notes: "In [Luther's] *Resolutions of the Disputations Concerning the Efficacy of Indulgences (1518)* he complained that the inquisitors were so zealous that they made heretics of the most pious Christians. 'For what else do the cases of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Lorenzo Valla, Petrus Ravenna, Johannes Vesalius, and most recently, Johann Reuchlin and Jacques Lefèvre show? Contrary to their own intentions, their well-meaning words were turned into evil.'" See: Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 17. This is also mentioned in the next chapter.

establishing the backdrop of a consistent and pervasive model of magical efficacy – not only to lend credibility but also comprehensibility to the following arguments for the presence of the narrative in humanist and Protestant magic/anti-magic discourses by implication and allusion rather than overt reference.

The path we follow is well worn by the several scholars who have already turned their attention to the significance of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in the popular imagination and, consequently, in the construction of Catholic anti-magic theology. Perhaps the boldest claim in these studies – and the most illustrative – belongs to Joshua Trachtenberg, who writes the following in his *The Devil and the Jews* (1943):

> The Solomon cycle of legends merits special attention since it seems to have made a particularly strong impression on the medieval imagination. These legends possessed two main elements: the wise monarch's dominion over the devil and demons and his utilization of this power for magical ends. This latter theme was developed with all sorts of variations, so that Solomon came to be regarded both as the type of the sorcerer and the original source of the occult science. So deeply did the belief in his magical supremacy enter into medieval thought that nothing more was required to authenticate the worth of a formula or an amulet than to trace it to him, and the most popular magical works drew their authority from his reputation.[2]

We will return to Trachtenberg below to address an evidentiary claim he goes on to make that, "the number of Solomonic pseudoepigrapha devoted to magic runs into the scores."[3] First, however, we introduce other important scholars who have come to similar conclusions regarding the significance of allusive potential of the figure of Solomon in the medieval and into the early modern era.

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[2] Trachtenberg 63.

[3] Trachtenberg 63.

The earliest study of this sort predates Trachtenberg's by two decades, and is in fact among the sources which Trachtenberg himself consulted. American historian, Lynn Thorndike devoted an entire chapter of his monumental, eight-volume study, *History of Magic and Experimental Science* (1923-1958) to magical Solomonic pseudoepigrapha.[4] He introduces it as follows:

> It was only natural that Solomon, regarded as the wisest man in the history of the world, should be represented in oriental tradition as the worker of many marvels and that in the course of time books of magic should be attributed to him, just as treatises on the interpretations of dreams should be interpreted to Joseph and Daniel.[5]

Also writing in the first half of the twentieth century, still a few years before Trachtenberg, was German folklorist, Will-Erich Peuckert. In his *Pansophie: Ein Versuch zur Geschichte der weißen und schwarzen Magie* (*Pansophie: Towards a History of White and Black Magic*: 1936, revised and expanded 1956), he remarks:

> King Solomon played a great role in magical writing. Apparently, one sees him appearing already at the end of the Hellenic period, at which time a "*Testament of Solomon*" emerges. God sent the Jewish king a magic ring through Raphael and with it Solomon compelled demons to reveal to him their station and abilities. In the twelfth or thirteenth century a *Key of Solomon* appears together with the *Testament*; the manuscript "Lemegeton" or of a "Lesser Key of Solomon" in the British museum is dated approximately to 1700.[6]

It is evident from these brief quotes that both Thorndike and Peuckert also recognize the popularity of the narrative. Notably, Thorndike even speculates on the relationship of

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[4] See Thorndike's chapter XLIX in vol. II, "Solomon and the Ars Notoria."

[5] Thorndike 279.

[6] The English translation is my own. Peuckert's German reads "Der König Salomo spielte im magischen Schrifttum eine große Rolle. Man sieht ihn anscheinend schon am Ende der hellenistischen Zeit auftauchen, in welche Zeit ein Testamentum Salomonis hinaufgeschoben wird. Gott schickte dem jüdischen König einen Zauberring durch Raphael und Salomo beschwor durch diesen die Dämonen, sich ihm in ihrem Amt und ihren Leistung zu offenbaren. Im zwölften oder dreizehnten Jahrhundert erscheint, zusammen geschrieben mit dem Testamentum, ein Schlüssel Salomonis; die Handschrift Lemegeton oder eines Lesser Key of Solomon im Britischen Museum wird um etwa 1700 angesetzt." See: Will-Erich Peuckert *Pansophie: [teil 1]* (Berlin: E. Schmidt, 1956) 47.

magical practice to an allusive referent (i.e. Solomon to magic, Daniel and Joseph to dream interpretation) in terms that Dorothea Salzer would not theorize with her *unio magica* for almost another hundred years.

Yet returning to studies on Solomon and magic specifically, shortly after Trachtenberg (though apparently unaware of his work), E. M. Butler follows with her study, *Ritual Magic* (1949). Nearly half of Butler's book deals with the significance of the figure of Solomon and the apocryphal narrative in ritual magic. Her first chapter, "The Solomon Cycle," begins:

> It is no more than Solomon's due that his is the name which carries the guns in the rituals of ceremonial magic; for his world-wide reputation as the master of legions of spirits has endured for at least two thousand years. The Wise King of the Bible, the Talmud and the Koran; the hero of the *Arabian Nights*, of Firdausī's *Suleiman Namah* and countless other poems and tales; the author of *Proverbs*, Ecclesiastes, the *Song of Songs*, and *Wisdom* was rumored throughout the East and West to have left behind him secret books of magic. For only magic could account for the power, the glory and the riches associated with his name. Moreover the ambiguous light shed by the Old Testament over the great king in his declining years, when he loved strange women and followed after their gods, enveloped him in that atmosphere of mystery and guilt which vastly enhances the prestige of practicing magicians, about whom something holy and unholy perpetually revolves. So that it is doubtful at least if the rituals attributed to Solomon would have carried the spiritual underworld by storm as they did if no breath of things unlawful had ever tarnished his name.[7]

More recent scholars, too, have repeated these observations with varying degrees of attention to Solomon specifically: Richard Kieckhefer in *Magic in the Middle Ages* (1989), for example, Pablo A. Torijano, in *Solomon, the Esoteric King: From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition* (2002), and Julien Véronèse in his article, "God's Names and Their Uses in the Books of Magic Attributed to King Solomon" (2010). The

[7] Butler 47.

list could continue, but the point is made: scholars who have investigated European magic as demon compulsion have unfailingly found the figure of Solomon at the center of such traditions. Thus we may return to Trachtenberg's claim that the texts of Solomonic pseudoepigrapha numbered into the scores.

Trachtenberg himself gives no more than a few examples of such texts, though he does additionally identify a few medieval Catholic theologians who either attributed all magic to Solomon himself or condemned the persistent pseudoepigraphy that multiplied the texts of Solomonic magic.[8] Will-Erich Peuckert, however, opens a treasure trove that allows us to place ten or so Solomonic ritual texts in circulation in Germany in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century by identifying as sources *das puch aller verpoten kunst, ungelaubens und der zaubrey* (*The Book of All Forbidden Arts, Heresy and Sorcery*, 1450s) of Bavarian physician, Johannes Hartlieb (ca. 1410-1486) and the *Antipalus maleficiorum* (1508) of Benedictine abbot, polymath, and occultist, Johannes Trithemius of Sponheim (1462-1516).[9]

Peuckert begins by quoting Hartlieb's warning to his readers against the practice of the "*schwartze kunst*" ("black art," i.e. *nigromantia*), in which he condemns four manuals of ritual magic by name:

> The masters of this art need various books, figures, and symbols for such things. One, they call *sigillum Salomonis* (*Seal of Solomon*), another *claviculum Salomonis* (*Key of Solomon*), the third *Hierarchiam* (*Hierarchy*), the fourth *Schemhamphoras* and various other symbols. With the symbols and execrable words the man binds himself to the devil and the devil to the man. The same writings of the evil art teach how one can compel the devil with symbols and

[8] See Trachtenberg 64.
[9] Peuckert 46-55.

> secret words… The devil speaks to his master as though he suffers greatly that he must answer the summons and complains, "You torture me greatly. O poor master, miserably you allow yourself to be seduced and led astray…"[10]

Both the titles Hartlieb gives and his reference to "compelling the devil with symbols and secret words" confirm that at least three of the four texts are connected to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's control over demons: the *Seal of Solomon*, the *Key of Solomon*, and the *Schemhamphoras*.[11] Each of these (though not the otherwise unattested *Hierarchiam*)[12] also appears on the other list of ritual texts that Peuckert identifies: Trithemius' *Antipalus maleficiorum*.[13]

The *Antipalus* provides a significantly longer list. Even though all three of the Solomonic texts attested in Hartlieb are reduplicated in Trithemius (fifty years later and elsewhere in Germany), he nevertheless raises the tally of late medieval and early modern Solomonic pseudoepigrapha considerably. Of the 38 manuals of demonic magic named in *Antipalus,* Trithemius reports that 8 are directly attributed to Solomon in brief descriptions he provides of each text.[14] Significantly, many others contain wisdom or secrets of Solomon but are not attributed to him directly.[15]

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[10] The English translation is my own. Peuckert's German reads "Zu sölichen sachen prauchen die maister dieser kunst gar manigerlay püch, vigur und caracter. ains haissen sy sigillum Salomonis, das ander claviculam Salomonis, das dritt Jerarchiam, das viert Schamphoras vnd sunst caracter gar manigerlay. mit den caractern vnd vnkunden worten verpint sich mit der mensch mit dem tuiffel vnd der tuifel mit dem menschen. die selb geschrift der bösen kunst lert, wie man den tuiffel pannen müg vnd sol mit den caractern vnd verporgen worten… Der tuiffel tüt zu seinem maister, als ob er groß leiden hab das er zu jm kommen müß vnd clagt vast: o laidigst mich groß vnd swärlich! O du armer maister, jämmerlich last du dich verlaiten vnd verführen…" (46).

[11] This may refer to a part of the *Liber Razielis*, which circulated independently of the rest of the text. See Page's note on p. 180.

[12] Leo Ruickbie, *A Brief Guide to the Supernatural* (Philadelphia: Running Press, 2012) 185.

[13] See Peuckert 47-55.

[14] Others, like the *Picatrix* are easily connected to Solomon in individual rituals, though not attributed to Solomon as a work. See: Ruickbe 185.

[15] *Picatrix* is a good example of this sort of text.

The eight or so titles of Solomonic pseudoepigrapha identified by Peuckert fall short of the "scores" that Trachtenberg claims, but the Hartlieb and Trithemius texts are not the only period sources from which to draw. Thorndike's even earlier study, about which it seems Peuckert was unaware, pulls from still other sources – lists of prohibited texts in the writings of medieval theologians William of Auvergne (ca. 1180/90-1249) and Albertus Magnus (ca. 1200-1280).[16] Thorndike's two additional period sources,[17] however, appear to represent the last of the significant period lists of Solomonic pseudoepigrapha from the medieval or early modern eras that are presently known or considered by scholars. From there, the scholarship proceeds piecemeal, adding titles only one at a time. Yet even much of this work – slow though it is – has already been done by the other scholars, previously named, whose work likewise concerns the significance of the figure of Solomon in the practice of ritual magic (i.e. illicit demon compulsion).

For instance, E. M. Butler reminds us of the ritual significance of the *Testament of Solomon* (already discussed in chapters 1 and 2) during the Middle Ages and early modern era and also adds the *Herbarium Salomonis*, *Hygromantia Salomonis*, *Liber de Throno Salomonis*, and the *Schemhamphoras de Salomonis Regis* (*Schemhamphoras of Solomon the King*) to our tally – presumably all from different sources.[18] Likewise, Julien

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[16] Thorndike writes, "The *Liber sacratus*, as William of Auvergne twice entitles it, or the *Liber sacer* or *Liber juratus*, as it is also called in the manuscripts, is associated with the name of Honorius as well as Solomon, and is often spoken of as the *Sworn Book of Honorius*" 283.

[17] Thorndike incorporates lists of Solomonic texts from the writings of both William of Auvergne and Albertus Magnus into his account. In Auvergne's *De legibus* (cap. 27), he finds the *Idea Salomonis et entocta*, the *Sacratus*, and the *Mandel* (or *Almandal*). In Albertus Magnus' *Speculum Astronomiae* (cap. 11), he claims to have located five "Solomonic" treatises, but lists only three: *De figura Almandel*, *De novem candariis*, and *De quatuor annulis* (280).

[18] Butler 48.

Véronèse adds the lesser-known *Liber Bileth*, as yet another explicitly Solomonic text in his article, "God's Names and Their Uses in the Books of Magic Attributed to King Solomon" (2010). Richard identifies the *Munich Handbook of Necromancy*,[19] a compilation of rituals, which, though not attributed to Solomon as a whole, contains multiple "Solomonic" formulas.[20]

Still other contemporary studies are available that pick up additional items in this list, including some that fall outside the time frame with which this study is concerned. Paul Kléber Monod's study, for example, *Solomon's Secret Arts: The Occult in the Age of the Enlightenment*, begins its examination of the numerous texts he covers with the mid seventeenth century, thus casting the apparent absence of the Solomon narrative in the sixteenth century under even greater suspicion.[21] Nevertheless, the studies mentioned above are perhaps the best known and seem to account collectively for the historically attested Solomonic pseudoepigrapha that can be demonstrated to have been circulating during the late medieval and early modern eras.

Overall, it would seem that Trachtenberg's claim of "scores" of magical Solomonic pseudoepigrapha in the late medieval and early modern eras may prove difficult to substantiate literally. Yet the number of such texts that can be identified – nearer to one score – is nevertheless sufficient to demonstrate the "particularly strong impression on the medieval imagination" of the Solomon narrative and to support the

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[19] This text is Codex Latinus Monacensis 849 in the Bavarian State Library.

[20] See: Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (University Park, Pa. [u.a.: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 2012).

[21] See: Paul K. Monod, *Solomon's Secret Arts: The Occult in the Age of Enlightenment* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2013).

plausibility of the other claim he makes (and to which we previously promised to return): namely, that "Solomon came to be regarded both as the type of the sorcerer and the original source of the occult science."[22] This connection of the figure of Solomon to the act of demon compulsion also connects the act of demon compulsion to the figure of Solomon and thus the apocryphal narrative including Solomon's *formula* – the *Shem ha-Mephorash*.

Throughout the Middle Ages and even into the early modern era, then, evidence suggests that demonic magic – illicit demon compulsion – was absolutely connected with the figure of Solomon, not only in the popular imagination, but in Catholic theology as well. This much is demonstrated by the fact that most of the titles attested in the medieval and early modern periods survive in theological prohibitions and condemnations of ritual magic. Moreover, the fact that the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons continued to be a concern for Catholic demonologists is evident from the inclusion of magical Solomonic pseudepigrapha in the *Index librorum Prohibitorum* (*Index of Forbidden Books* 1559)[23] and a brief description of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in the immensely popular three-volume *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex* (*Magical Investigations in Six Books*) of Martin Del Rio, who, as we have already mentioned, still found it necessary to rehearse and refute the Solomon narrative in 1599-1600 – nearly

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[22] Trachtenberg 63.

[23] Prohibited under "Incertorum auctor. libri prohibiti." ("uncertain authors, prohibited books") as "Lib. Decem annullorum, Quattuor fpeculorú, Imaginú Thobiæ, Imaginum ptolomæi, Virginalis, Clauicula Salomonis. Libri Salomonis Magicis fuperftitionibus refertus." (The Books of...) in the 1559 edition of the *Index*, Antonio Blado, *Index Auctorum Et Libroru[m] Qui Ab Officio Sanctae Rom. Et Vniversalis Inquisitionis Caueri Ab Omnibus Et Singulis in Vniuersa Christiana Republica Mandantur: Sub Censuris Contra Legentes, Uel Tenetes Libros Prohibitos in Bulla, Quae Lecta Est in Coena Dni Expressis, Et Sub Aliis Poenis in Decreto Eiusdem Sacri Officii Contentis*. Roma: Apud Antonium Bladum, 1559.

one hundred years after Trithemius wrote his *Antipalus maleficiorum*.[24] Thus, given the pervasiveness of the narrative in the medieval and early modern eras as well as how Scholastic anti-magic theology instrumentalized it for its purposes, not to mention its resurgence in the seventeenth century (as Monod has demonstrated with his book), it would be noteworthy indeed should that narrative be entirely missing from the magico-theological and magico-philosophical writings of the humanists and the theology of Martin Luther. Yet none of the aforementioned studies mentions a humanist or Lutheran response to it.

The Figure of Solomon Recedes from *Published* Sixteenth-Century Discourse on Magic

Many scholars of sixteenth century magic seem to regard the model of magical efficacy based on the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons and the magical texts inspired by it as artifacts or remnants of the Middle Ages. Early scholars of Renaissance magic such as D. P. Walker and Frances Yates of the Warburg School, for instance, were highly dismissive of medieval magic and the possibility of its influence on Renaissance magic, to the point where they couched the Renaissance Hermetic Tradition

[24] See Libri II, Quaestio III in Martín A Delrío, Gérard Rivius, and Ernst, *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex, in Tres Tomos Partiti. Auctore Martino Del Rio, Societatis Jesu Presbytero* (Lovanii, ex officina Gerardi Rivii. Anno M.D. XCIX.-M. DC, 1599) 98-99. See also Martín A Delrío and P G. Maxwell-Stuart *Investigations into Magic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) 72.

in nearly *sui generis* terms, isolating it from both the Middle Ages and the Reformation alike.[25]

Scholars like Walker and Yates thought they had found in Renaissance magic a reformation both analogous and contemporaneous to the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation. What they discovered, however, was in many respects a Renaissance rebranding of a familiar medieval paradigm that took place both north and south of the Alps. The narrative that such modern scholars reconstructed was the very narrative that Renaissance magicians offered in their own writing. The Renaissance magicians, however, had reasons to obscure part of their interests, since discussion of magic of any kind was potentially fraught, especially at the dawn of publishing when one's name was quite visibly attached to the assertions in a text.

In their most cherished publicity accounts, Renaissance magician-theologians (like the sixteenth century Protestant reformers who followed them) presented their movement as a return to the "original sources" (*ad fontes*) – a re-discovery and re-formation of the pristine wisdom of an incorrupt past. The original knowledge that they claimed to be uncovering had first been described in the writings of Marsilio Ficino as *prisca theologia* – a single, true theology, threading through all religions, and given by God to man in antiquity.[26] Moreover, part of the program of uncovering the *prisca*

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[25] For a thorough critique of the construction of the Middle Ages as a "fossilized" counterpart to the idealized "Renaissance," see: Tollebeek, J. "'Renaissance'; and 'fossilization': Michelet, Burckhardt, and Huizinga." *Renaissance Studies*. 15.3 (2001): 354-366. Tollebeek writes, "Associating the Renaissance so strongly with change and modernization also created a need for a conceptual counterpart to this Renaissance notion. This counterpart was found in the concept of 'fossilization'. Ranged against the Renaissance was a period which was seen as immobile, and which was said to have been brought to an end precisely by the dynamic of the Renaissance. This gave rise to an antagonistic relationship between the Renaissance and the Middle Ages" (356).

[26] Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Routledge: London, 1964), 14–18 and 43f.

theologia involved identifying and describing *magia naturalis* (natural magic) and disentangling it from the demonic pact of Aquinas' theory of demonic magic. The idea of a "natural magic," as we mentioned in the previous chapter, distinct from demonic magic had been initiated by William of Auvergne (ca. 1180/90-1249) in his *De Legibus* (*On the Laws* 1228-30),[27] but development of this line of thought was hampered by Aquinas' subsequent demonology in *De Potentia* and the *Summa Theolgia*. It was the rehabilitation and cultivation of this pre-Thoman narrative of a natural magic that allowed Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Johannes Reuchlin to distinguish their own magical interests and/or pursuits from the illicit magic that Aquinas described and what allowed their successor, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim (1486-1535), author of *De Occulta Philosophia Libri Tres* (1531), to look back with scorn on the "ignorant necromancers" of the previous century.[28]

Perhaps by design or perhaps inadvertently, Aquinas' definition of magic – marvelous effects achieved through demonic intervention resulting from explicit or implicit demonic pact – had provided his successors, the Dominicans, the theological means to curtail not only experimentation but also even inquiry into questions of the nature of causation in the physical world. Anything that could not be demonstrated to be "natural" to the theologians' satisfaction could be condemned as resulting from demonic intervention. Moreover, after the elevation of idolatry to the capital crime of heresy in the "Witch Bull," *Summis desiderantes affectibus* of 1484, such experimentation or open

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[27] Benedek Láng, *Unlocked Books: Manuscripts of Learned Magic in the Medieval Libraries of Central Europe* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 2010) 25.

[28] See: Brian P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2006) 62.

inquiry could be punishable by death. Scholastic demonology thus forced a particularly inconvenient interpretation of a personal and malevolent "demon" on the generation of humanist thinkers who had become fascinated by the Neo-Platonic cosmology through the recovery of a number of Platonic and Neo-Platonic texts. The contrast in what doors these two philosophies opened was striking. Aquinas' theory of magic did not allow for impersonal, non-malevolent demons, and the Neo-Platonic cosmology depended on intermediary forces (including impersonal, neutral "daimons") to explain causality in nature.[29] Thus, the university theologians (Aquinas' successors) held an effective monopoly on the production and dissemination of knowledge as a result of their ability to condemn as "magic" anything that didn't suit them, and the inquisitive humanists found themselves between an epistemological rock and a hard place as they began to ponder and experiment with causal forces.

Although these Renaissance magician-theologians presented their humanist researches into Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldean texts as the recovery of the true nature of religion and with it the true nature of magic, the question still remains as to the relationship of the *magia naturalis* that they claimed to be recovering to the prohibited medieval demonic theory of magic that preceded and surrounded them. Did they succeed in abandoning the paradigm of Solomonic demon compulsion? Furthermore, did they really even intend to? These questions are all the more pertinent because many of the

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[29] "Prinzipiell hat Ficino in *De Vita* Freilich ein (aus christlicher Sicht) unorthodoxes, platonisches Dämonenverständnis vor Augen - er fasst die mit dem Begriff gekennzeichneten Zwischenwesen unter Anderem als Himmelskörpern zugeordnet seien und so auch auf den Menscheneinwirken könnten; im Hintergrund schwingen hier auch seine dämonologischen Ausführungen in *De Amore* mit." See: Otto, Bernd-Christian. *Magie: Rezeptions und Diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) 459f.

texts which these humanist magician-theologians believed to be sources of this ancient wisdom were actually not at all ancient, and some of them, moreover, even included accounts of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's control over demons. (We will discuss the influence of two such texts, *Picatrix* and *Liber Razielis*, on Ficino, Pico, and Reuchlin below.) Thus, insofar as each of them believed in the legitimacy of his pursuit of *prisca theologia* and *magia naturalis* as well as the antiquity and authority of the texts, he was confronted with evidence that there was at least some truth to the apocryphal Solomon narrative. For this reason, even the relatively small number of references (direct as well as oblique) to Solomon's power and authority in the writings of these magician-theologians merits careful attention.

Unlike those in the anonymous and pseudepigraphic magical literature that circulated in manuscript form at the same time (including, importantly, both *Picatrix* and the *Liber Razielis*), references to the apocryphal Solomon narrative in published magical works of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are indeed few. Nevertheless, each author demonstrates continued engagement with the logic of medieval theory of magic (i.e. demon compulsion), even as he attempted to circumvent Aquinas' prohibition by reframing the intermediary force in his theory of magic as something other than the demons of Aquinas' pact. Yet not all references to the narrative are allusive and covert. In *De Verbo Mirifico*, for instance, Reuchlin goes so far as to try to rehabilitate Solomon by arguing that the tradition rather than Solomon was corrupted because of insufficient knowledge of the necessary languages. We will return to this in our discussion of the potential link between the *Liber Razielis* and Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*, but we

remark here, in anticipation of that return, that the intermediary forces in the *Liber Razielis* are identified as angels, not demons.

This section briefly traces the development of that Renaissance interest in *magia naturalis* (natural magic). It proceeds from the writings of Florentine Neo-Platonist and magician-theologian, Marsilio Ficino, who is credited with reestablishing the discourse of "natural magic" in the Renaissance, through the writings of Ficino's friend and younger contemporary, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and into the Northern Renaissance by way of two important texts of Johannes Reuchlin (*De Verbo Mirifico*, 1496 and *De Arte Cabalistica*, 1517), who met Pico on a trip to Italy in 1490.[30] It appears to have been Pico who introduced Reuchlin to the Christian exegetical potential of the Jewish Kabbalah as well as the idea of legitimizing Jewish theurgy[31] (magic, including potentially that described in the *Liber Razielis*) as a form of natural magic.

The purpose of tracing this evolution is twofold. First, it reveals part of the humanist interest in cultivating a discourse of natural magic to have been a response to the prohibition against *nigromantia* as defined by the paradigmatic apocryphal Solomon narrative and to the recent elevation of *maleficium* to the capital crime of heresy in 1484 through the "Witch Bull." As we have mentioned, scholarly investigations of Renaissance magic has tended to focus on the importation of Hermeticism and Christian Cabala in the fifteenth century as moments of discovery or genesis, only to a lesser extent as strategic response or adaptation, and still less as a form of continuation. Yet it cannot be a mere

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[30] See: Posset 73.

[31] From Greek θεουργία (*theourgia*), "theurgy" describes the practice of rituals, performed with the intention of invoking the action or evoking the presence of one or more gods (as opposed to demons).

coincidence that the new Renaissance theories of magic strove to sidestep Aquinas' prohibition of magic as explicit or implicit demonic pact, each in its own way. Second, comparing what Pico's own words about the *Shem ha-Mephorash* to the very central role it occupies in Johannes Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* calls into question the established scholarly interpretation of Reuchlin's authorship of *De Verbo Mirifico* as resulting primarily from his introduction to Kabbalah by Pico in Italy.

As we will show instead, Pico does indeed write about "operating by means of the names of God" and deriving the name of seventy-two letters from the Tetragrammaton, but the wonderworking word of Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* bears a much stronger resemblance to the efficacious power of the ineffable name of God in the apocryphal Solomon narrative than the much more sophisticated *gematria* that Pico describes in his discussion of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. This in turn points to a relative likelihood of Reuchlin's having drawn part of his inspiration for the *De Verbo Mirifico* from additional sources, including the Solomonic *Liber Razielis*, which Reuchlin is known to have owned and, because of its relatively wide circulation in Latin at the time, Reuchlin would have been able to read even before his knowledge of Hebrew was sufficient to read other Jewish texts.[32]

Marsilio Ficino, *Prisca Theologia* and *Magia Naturalis*

Though there are interesting details to be gleaned from both Ficino's writings and his biography regarding his engagement with the apocryphal Solomon narrative, the

[32] See: Posset (2.4, "In search of the name of God: Learning Hebrew, turning to theology"), 67-72.

primary significance of Florentine humanist to the present project is not in the direct influence of the apocryphal Solomon narrative on his theories of magic. Rather, it lies in what he made possible for contemporaries and successors like Giovanni Pico and Johannes Reuchlin, by inaugurating the discourse of *prisca theologia*[33] ("original theology") and reviving and cultivating that of *magia naturalis*. Actually, Ficino was the first to use the term *prisca theologia* and, likewise, it is Ficino whom scholars have credited with reestablishing the idea of *magia naturalis* in ways that pressed the question of its liceity and challenged blanket theological prohibitions against all magic as demonic intervention. As we will see, moreover, it was Ficino's development of these discourses that eventually enabled Reuchlin to reapproach the figure of Solomon – previously inextricably associated with illicit demonic magic – as *prisca theologia* in his *De Verbo Mirifico*.

Taken together, the two theological discourses of *prisca theologia* and *magia naturalis* were the basis not only of Ficino's theory of magic, but also of those of both Giovanni Pico and Reuchlin, the latter, as we have said, being the first Northern European Christian to bring this kind of magico-theological thinking back across the Alps. The two concepts work together in this way: the case for *magia naturalis* (natural magic) is much stronger if what Ficino claims about *prisca theologia* is also true. If indeed God did give to mankind a single true theology in antiquity, parts of which were

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[33] See: Bernd-Christian Otto, *Magie: Rezeptions und Diskursgeschichtliche Analysen von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) 423f. Regarding Ficino's role in the establishment of the discourse of *prisca theologia*, he writes: "Der Florentiner [Ficino] glaubte durch das *Corpus Hermeticum* Zugang zu einer uralten Weisheitslehre - einer *prisca theologia* - zu erhalten, die noch vor die biblischen Schriften zu datieren sei. [...] Durch die evolutionäre Konstruktion der *prisca theologia* - mit ihm selbst als zentralem, frühneuzeitlichem Protagonisten - hoffte er letzlich auch die angestrebte Synthese des durch ihn wiederbelebten Platonismus mit dem Christentum legitimieren zu können."

to be found even in the teachings of pagans, then it would certainly be not only permissible, but also even necessary, to seek it.

This strategy, as we will see, worked to counter an effective theological prohibition against inquiry into the nature of causality in the physical world (framed as "magic"). In this context, the stronger and more convincing the case for the reality of a *prisca theologia*, the more intriguing – and ideally the more permissible – the study of previously forbidden texts would become. The value of such a strategy can be appreciated against the backdrop of ongoing late medieval and early modern dispute among theologians as to whether anything of value could be salvaged from pagan philosophy. Consequently, if the contemplation of such previously forbidden texts were to be tolerated by the institutional Church for the very reason that they might contain part of God's revelation, then the content of those texts – even "magical" content – could not so easily be forbidden or even dismissed. It was conceivable, after all, that some form of "natural magic" (as opposed to demonic magic) was included in God's original revelation, for tradition maintained that many of the apostles and prophets had worked wonders… to say nothing of Solomon.

The texts that interested Ficino were mostly Greek Platonic and Neo-Platonic works that had been previously thought lost, but also some known only through Latin translations which Ficino considered deficient.[34] That Ficino came to know of these texts

[34] It is important to note the distinction was not made at the time. Medievals thought that Neo-Platonism was older than it was. This is especially relevant to discussion of the *Corpus Hermeticum* and the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. The author of the *Corpus Hermeticum* (dating from the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE) was thought to have been a contemporary of Moses and the author of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, i.e. Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (late fifth - early sixth centuries) was thought to have been the same Dionysius who knew the apostle Paul.

at all is the result of unique circumstances. At a young age, he was brought into the household of Cosimo de' Medici under his lifelong patronage, learned ancient Greek – one of the first Christians of the Latin West to do so –, and translated numerous texts for his master. The resources and influence of his patron not only enabled Ficino to devote himself to his studies, but also afforded him access to rare Greek manuscripts, including works of Plato previously lost to the Latin West, and importantly, the *Asclepius*, a magico-philosophical Neo-Platonic text, which was thought to have been written by the legendary Egyptian magus, Hermes Trismegistus, and which Ficino translated into Latin for Cosimo in 1463. Ficino's famous translation of the *Asclepius* and his publication of it together with *Poimandres* as *Corpus Hermeticum* in 1471 had far-reaching consequences for the development of the discourses of Renaissance magic. Studies like Otto's *Magie* have already treated Ficino's understanding of Hermetic philosophy and his role in its revival.[35] However, it is his development of a Christian apologia for his translation of pagan Greek philosophy and his own theory of magic that primarily concerns us here.

The Greek philosophy and pagan theology with which Ficino concerned himself often included references to magic, or at least something that the Church regarded as magic. Yet the specter of Aquinas with his catch-all theory of magic still potentially barred individual humanist like Ficino from accessing the magical content of those texts. Thus, avoiding charges of the heresies associated with magic would require an additional strategy. In order for Ficino and others to pursue their inquiries and experiments into the nature of "magical" causality, Aquinas would have to be proven wrong, or better still,

[35] See also: D. P. Walker, *Spiritual & Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

incomplete. Ficino met that challenge by constructing a theory of natural magic that worked to undermine Aquinas' prohibition, by arguing that magic – true magic – was in fact natural to God's created order and distinct from *nigromantia*. Thus, rhetorically, Ficino is able to avoid directly contradicting Aquinas' description of *nigromantia*, by siding with Aquinas against *nigromantia* (as illicit) while extolling the virtues of *magia naturalis* (as licit). His effective suggestion, then, is that both the Scholastic theologians and earlier magicians had merely failed to distinguish between *magia innaturalis* ("unnatural magic," i.e. demonic magic) and *magia naturalis* (natural magic).

The logic underlying this argument is telling. Ficino had two options available for undermining Aquinas' definition of magic as inevitably including an idolatrous pact with a demon. One possibility was to demonstrate that the demons that intervened in magic were not the same evil angels who had rebelled against God, upon which Aquinas' theory of illicit magic depends. The other was to show that the effects of magic were not the result of demonic intervention at all. In fact, Ficino claims both, as we will see. We will return to his redefinition of magic, but proceed here with an excerpt from his *Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love* (written c. 1469, published 1484) in which he mounts a careful *apologia* regarding the nature demons, reconciling the philosophy of Plato with the theology of Dionysius the Areopagite. Ficino writes:

> The Soul of the World, that is of Prime Matter, and the souls of the twelve spheres and the stars the Platonists call *gods* because they are very close to the Angelic Mind and the Supreme God. The creatures which inhabit the region of ethereal fire, located under the moon, and the regions of pure air and humid air (next to water), the Platonists call *daemons*. But those which inhabit the earth, and are rational, the Platonists call *men*. The gods are both immortal and impassible; men are both mortal and passible; demons are of course immortal but are also passible.

> The Platonists do not attribute to daemons the passions of the body, but only certain passions of the soul which somehow cause them to like good men and dislike bad ones. Daemons involve themselves very closely and zealously in taking care of the affairs of lower creatures, especially human beings. Because of this service, all daemons seem good. Some Platonists and some Christian theologians have said that there are some other daemons which are evil, but for the present we shall not argue about the evil daemons.
>
> The good daemons, who are our guardians, Dionysius the Areopagite usually calls by the proper name *angels*, *rulers of the lower world*; this differs very little from the opinion of Plato. Moreover, those souls whom Plato calls *gods*, or the *souls of the spheres of the stars*, we can call *angels*, or *ministers of God*, as Dionysius does. This, too, does not disagree with Plato, for the reason that, as is apparent in the tenth book of the *Laws*, Plato does not in the least enclose souls of this kind within the confines of their spheres in the way that he confines the souls of earthly creatures to their bodies. Rather he asserts that the heavenly souls are endowed with such great power by the supreme God that they are able at the same time to enjoy the sight of God, and without and effort or trouble control and move the spheres of the universe according to the will of their father, and, by moving the spheres, easily govern lower things. Thus the difference between Plato and Dionysius is a matter of words rather than opinion.[36]

Ficino thus begins by dividing demons into good and evil, which he identified previously as "kalodemons" and "kakodemons" respectively,[37] and then focuses on the good demons, which "Dionysius the Areopagite usually calls by the proper name, angels," while brushing aside discussion of the daemons, which "some Platonists and some Christian theologians" have called evil.

At the time Ficino wrote his *Commentary*, Dionysius the Areopagite was still considered a canonical authority in the Western Church (not yet "Pseudo-Dionysius" that Western theologians know today), so Ficino's comparison of Plato to Dionysius may be understood as strategic. In the same way that Aquinas "baptized" Aristotle by reconciling

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[36] Marsilio Ficino and Sears R. Jayne, *Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love* (Woodstock, CT: Spring Publications, 1985) 110f.

[37] Ficino and Jayne 119.

him with the writings of Augustine, Ficino attempts to show agreement between philosopher and theologian: "Thus the difference between Plato and Dionysius is a matter of words rather than opinion."[38]

Yet merely to redefine the demon would still leave Ficino with no theory of causality in his defense of magic. He has not addressed how the effects of magic are achieved, which is critical because, even if Ficino is convincing in his rehabilitation of good daemons as angels, he must address Aquinas' assertion in *De Potentia* that "angels are not compelled."[39] Ficino's solution is a causality defined not by the intercession of intermediary beings, but rather as the universal force of attraction known as love. It is for this reason that we find the earliest articulation of Ficino's theory of magic in a commentary on *Plato's Symposium on Love*.

In the quote below, also from his *Commentary*, we can see how Ficino undermines Aquinas' fundamental assumptions about the nature of magic in at least three places: the nature of demons, the nature of magical causality as demonic intervention, and the nature of the relationship of the demon with the human agent. He writes:

> From this common relationship is born a common love; from love, a common attraction. And this is the true magic. Thus fire is drawn upward by the concavity of the sphere of the moon, because of a congruity of nature; air by the concavity of the fire; earth is drawn downward by the center of the world; water also is drawn by this region. Thus also the loadstone draws iron, amber draws chaff, and sulphur, fire; the sun turns many flowers and leaves toward itself, and the moon, the waters; Mars is accustomed to stir the winds, and the various plants also

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[38] The eighteen books of Marsilio Ficino's *Platonic Theology* (Latin: *Theologia platonica de immortalitate animorum*) written between 1469 and 1474 and it was published in 1482 are often regarded as Ficino's philosophical masterpiece.

[39] See Aquinas' *De Potentia* Q 6, A10: "It is clear, therefore, that these results of magic are produced by some external spirits: not however by righteous and good spirits; and this is clear for two reasons, First, because good spirits would not associate themselves with wicked men, such as are the majority of magicians; secondly, because they would not co-operate with man in wrong-doing, which is often the result of magic. It remains then for us to conclude that they are produced by evil spirits whom we call demons."

> attract to themselves various kinds of animals. In human affairs also, "his own pleasure draws each." Therefore the works of magic are the works of nature, but art is its handmaiden. For where anything is lacking in a natural relationship, art supplies it through vapors, numbers, figures, and qualities at the proper times. Just as in agriculture, nature produces crops, but art makes the preparations. The ancients attributed this art to daemons because the daemons understand what is the inter-relation of natural things, what is appropriate to each, and how the harmony of things, if it is lacking anywhere can be restored. Some are said to have been either friends, through some similarity of nature, such as Zoroaster and Socrates, or their beloveds, through worship, such as Apollonius Tyaneus and Porphyry. For this reason, signs, voices and portents from daemons are said to have come to them, when they were awake, or oracles and visions when they were asleep. They seem to have become magicians through the friendship of the demons, just as the daemons are magicians through understanding the friendship of things themselves. And nature, because of mutual love, is called a magician.[40]

Ficino's theory of magic thus asserts three issues (the nature of demons is benevolent, generous, and wise; that the causality of magic is a natural force; and the relationship between the demon and the human agent is one of mutual love) as it demonstrates a strategic circumvention of Aquinas' anti-magic theology, and, as such, the influence of the apocryphal Solomon narrative is conspicuous not by its presence, but by the shadow it casts. Ultimately, the degree to which Ficino's theory of magic must depart from the apocryphal Solomon narrative is equal to the degree to which Aquinas has instrumentalized it.

Ficino begins the description of his theory of magic by establishing that its effects are achieved not through demonic manipulation of the material world, but rather through natural affinities and attractions. He accounts for the effects of the processes which he cites in his examples (e.g. magnetism, static electricity, combustibility, and gravity) with a single causality – the cosmic force of love. Implicit, therefore, in Ficino's single theory

[40] Ficino and Jayne 127.

of causality of love is, first, the assumption that this single causality would naturally extend to other – perhaps less well understood – "magical" processes as well, and, second, that it would be incumbent upon the theologian who objects to Ficino's theory to account otherwise for these natural phenomena in his objection. Thus, the use of the particular examples need not necessarily be taken as indicative of Ficino's interest in the natural phenomena he describes, but more likely of what he considers their rhetorical value in pointing to the limitations on investigations into causality in the physical world and occult phenomena of all sorts through the over zealous application of Aquinas' demonology – a growing concern for intellectuals beginning in the late fifteenth century during the rise of Scholastic demonology and witch trials.

In Ficino's theory, magical knowledge becomes knowledge of the natural, not the unnatural. By eliminating the intervention of the demon and casting "magic" as a natural force that acts upon everything at all times, Ficino provides a theory of causality within nature/creation which does not depend upon the intervention of the sort of demons described by Aquinas. Without a demonic causality, the demonic pact also becomes unnecessary. Yet Ficino does not eliminate demons from his theory of magic, but rather, he changes their relationship to the magician in a way that creates a transition for his contemporaries to move past Aquinas. Ficino replaces the demonic pact with a friendship – itself a kind of love – with a good demon, whom Ficino has redefined from Aquinas' malevolent fallen angel, into a benevolent and generous expert in the natural attractions and affinities between and among all things. Thus, while Ficino's theory of magic is still in one sense "demonic," it nevertheless pushes back against Aquinas' use of the

apocryphal narrative of Solomon's ability to compel demons to establish a *corpus delicti*. Because Aquinas assumes no other possible causality than the intervention of demons, and, moreover, because he allows for only one definition of demon (kakodaemon) in his theory of magic, magic's effects necessarily also serve as evidence of a sin committed. The demon Aquinas describes could only be compelled or bribed with worship (which he was able to isolate as idolatry because of the apocryphal Solomon narrative). In contrast, Ficino's model cannot take the effects of magic as evidence of the commission of idolatry (or any other sin, for that matter).

While Ficino's examples certainly seem to apply principally to what we would consider natural phenomena, it is clear from his brief description of the "art" of magic, that he does not exclude the magic that William of Auvergne railed against when he condemned the "idolatrous" cult of the stars and its use of seals, rings, characters, and images. Recall that Ficino describes the art of magic in very similar terms, writing, "For where anything is lacking in a natural relationship, art supplies it through vapors, numbers, figures, and qualities at the proper times." Thus in a real sense, Ficino's theory of magic in the *Commentary* does not seem to represent a new approach to magic so much an apologia for the old way.

History offers documentation for this assumption, in the form of Ficino's reception by the Church. After Ficino finished his translation of the complete works of Plato, he immediately wrote his first (Latin) version of the *Commentary*. After he finished that, he took holy orders (1473). Thus, when Ficino wrote the theory of magic in the *Commentary* that proposed a new approach to magic, he was not yet a cleric.

However, when he published the work in 1484 (the same year as the promulgation of the "Witch Bull," *Summis desiderantes affectibus*), he was. Likewise, it was as a priest that he was accused of magic before Pope Innocent VIII (reigned 1484-1492) in 1489, not for his *Commentary*, but rather for parts of his *De Vita Libri Tres*, published that same year. Little is known about the incident except that he was eventually cleared of all charges of heresy though apparently through the intercession of connections in the papal court.

For our purposes, Ficino's later articulation of his theory of magic in *De Vita Libri Tres* is similar to that in his earlier theory: in effect, he still accounts for all of the trappings of medieval magic – the vapors, etc. that he names in *Commentary* –, though explained in new forms. As before, these accounts serve to rectify imbalances. The primary difference between the theories in the two texts would seem to be a further definition of the cosmic force. What Ficino previously described as love drawing things together, he describes in the later work as emanations down through the spheres originating with planetary spirits.[41] As with his early theory of the magical force of love, these emanations are cast as natural part of the created order. Yet despite Ficino's careful description of these forces as impersonal planetary spirits, in his later theory, the art of magic which he describes as the influence of planetary spirits was apparently sufficiently objectionable to warrant an accusation of the heresy of magic even under the protection of his powerful patron, Lorenzo de' Medici ("the Magnificent"). Ficino, it seems, had pushed his apologia for magic to the limits by restoring any form of demonic intervention to the equation and allowing for the symbols, vapors, and other trappings of medieval

[41] D. P. Walker, *Spiritual & Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanella* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003) 12-24.

astrological magic – what William of Auvergne had condemned as the "idolatrous cult of the stars."[42]

Despite these difficulties, at least as important as Ficino's translations and original writings for the development of the Renaissance discourse of natural magic were Ficino's powerful and influential friends. No matter how knowledgeable and persuasive Ficino might have been, this alone did not preserve him from being tried for heresy. In 1489 he was indeed accused of magic before Pope Innocent VIII for certain assertions in the third book of his *De Vita Libri Tres*, published that same year, and thus found himself under suspicion of heresy.[43] It was the same Pope Innocent VIII who had promulgated the "Witch Bull" five years earlier in 1484 and who had condemned 13 of Pico's 900 theses as heretical or smacking of heresy in 1486.

Nonetheless, with intersession by others, he was pardoned, and so his interventions of *prisca theologia* and magic became standards for the humanists who were interested in magic after Aquinas. The situation would be exacerbated for one of his friends.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and the "Practical Science" of Kabbalah

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[42] For more on Ficino's reintroduction of demons into his theory of magic see: Otto 459-462.

[43] "[...] Ficino came close enough to theological unacceptability that the publication of *Three Books on Life* signaled the only time, seemingly, that his work drew negative attention from Church authorities. What precisely happened is vague, but a substantial correspondence after May, 1490, in which Ficino asked certain friends of his at the court of Pope Innocent VIII for help, suggests that certain people had called his orthodoxy into question. [Paul O. Kristeller, *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters: 4* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1996) 265-76]. By August of that year, Ficino was assured that his reputation was favorable at the Papal Court." See: Christopher S. Celenza "Marsilio Ficino," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 14 Feb. 2012, plato.stanford.edu/entries/ficino/.

Count Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-94), Ficino's friend, and younger contemporary, shared his convictions about *prisca theologia* and *magia naturalis*. Like Ficino, Pico's search for them included the works of Greek Neo-Platonists. Unlike Ficino, however, that search also included the writings of Jewish Kabbalists. His own knowledge of the Hebrew language in which most such texts were written was not particularly advanced, but the count of Mirandola paid the learned Italian Jew Falvius Mithradates to translate for him into Latin.[44] Thus, working from these translations, Pico was able to incorporate "Kabbalistic Conclusions" into his famous *900 Theses,* along with numerous conclusions drawn from the writings of Greek Neo-Platonists.

Whereas Ficino's inclusion in our project mostly serves the single purpose of establishing the origin of the Renaissance discourse of *prisca theologia* magical apologetics, Pico's is twofold. Not only did Pico introduce Reuchlin to the idea *prisca theologia*, thus serving as a sort of link in a chain between Ficino and Reuchlin, but he also seems to have been at least partially responsible for the latter's interest in the possibility of a Christian application for the Jewish Kabbalah.[45] By tracing the development of Pico's (mis)understanding of the Kabbalah, we are now able to establish a second important connection between Renaissance Italian and Northern thought. Not only did Pico himself continued to be influenced by the medieval Christian tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion as he attempted to decipher the Jewish Kabbalah, but his work also establishes points of reference for the view of the Jewish Kabbalah that

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[44] For a thorough discussion of the importance of Mithradates in the development of Christian Cabala, see: Wirszubski 69. See also: Posset 68-70, for discussion of Mithradates' influence on Reuchlin specifically.

[45] See: Posset 94-98.

Reuchlin would have learned from Pico when he met him in 1490 prior to authoring his *De Verbo Mirifico* in 1494.

As Pico understood it, the Kabbalah was not merely ancient wisdom, but in fact part of God's original direct revelation to mankind. Chaim Wirszubski, twentieth century scholar of Jewish Kabbalah, explains in *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (1989):

> Jewish traditionalism throve on the idea that all true tradition is ultimately revelation. The classic expression of that idea is that the whole body of Oral Law [i.e. Kabbalah], all niceties and elaborations included, had been revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai.[46]

Thus, the enthusiasm that Pico felt for Jewish mysticism and magic was understandable. In the Kabbalah, Pico thought he had discovered what he was looking for: *prisca theologia*. What is more, its precepts seemed to Pico to provide both a Jewish witness to the truth of Christianity, which could be used to convince the Jews of the truth of Catholic teaching,[47] and a legitimation of *magia naturalis*.[48]

Though Pico eagerly accepted this Jewish myth of Kabbalah's divine origins, his grasp of its teachings was not necessarily an accurate representation of Jewish tradition, as Wirszubski demonstrates at length in his book. One particular example of Pico's understandings and misunderstandings of the Jewish Kabbalah, however, is of interest to the present study: Pico's division of the Kabbalah into discreet practical and speculative

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[46] Wirszubski 121.

[47] See: Wirszubski 121.

[48] See: Zika "There seems to be an attempt once again here to present the Christian magic of *soliloquia* as a continuation and fulfillment not only of the operations of the ancient Jews, but also of those performed by the *prisci magi*" (133f.).

sciences.[49] This position is reflected in the first of his "Cabalistic Conclusions Confirming the Christian Religion," which reads:

> 11>1. Whatever other Cabalists say, in a first division I distinguish the science of Cabala into the science of *sefirot* and *shemot* [names], as it were into practical and speculative science.[50]

Wirszubski notes that the division Pico makes can indeed be traced to at least one Jewish Kabbalist author, Abraham Abulafia (b. 1240, died after 1291), but that such division represents a late and by no means universal opinion among Jewish Kabbalists.[51]

There are two points about Pico's division of the Kabbalah to which we would like to draw the reader's attention before proceeding because they exemplify the complicated terrain that Pico was negotiating and the limits on our understanding of it. First, most of the available scholarship has interpreted Pico as having associated the *sefirot* (emanations) with speculative science and the *shemot* (names) with practical science, i.e. "magic." Notably, this is opposite to the respective order in which Pico presents them.[52] However, such a reading is consistent with Abulafia's division (Pico's source), as attested in a letter Abulafia wrote to his disciple Yehuda Salmon, which appears anonymously in Cod. Vat. Ebr. 190 (fol. 120v) as *Summa Brevis Cabalae Que Intitulatur Rabi Ueude*. The relevant passage (Fol. 122 r) reads:

> I say now that this occult wisdom of the Kabbalah is indeed from a multitude of our doctors who are practiced in another wisdom of ours, which is called Talmud. And this wisdom is divided into two parts, generally, which are the science of the

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[49] Wirszubski 135.

[50] S. A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses [1486]* (S.l.: ACMRS [ARIZONA CENTER FOR, 2016) 519.

[51] Wirszubski writes, "Few Kabbalists were as conscious as was Abulafia of the difference between the Kabbala of the *sefirot* and the Kabbala of divine names" (135f.).

[52] For Farmer's justification of his minority, opposing reading: of see: Farmer n 518f.

> name of god, Tetragrammaton, through the mode of the ten numerations which are called *sefirot* (among which whoever separates is said to cut off the soles of the feet) And it is those which reveal the secret of unity. The second part is the science of the great name through the way of the 22 letters from which and by the points of which and by the accents of which are composed the names and characters and seals which names are invoked is spoken (God speaks) with the prophets in dreams, by *urim* and *thummim*, and through the holy spirit and through the prophets.[53]

Aside from this transposition of categories, the second point necessary to our vision of what Pico was attempting is this: the very division of the Kabbalah into discreet speculative and practical sciences is questionable in Pico's Christian Cabala and not the matter of which should be associated with *shemot* (i.e. names) and which with *sefirot* (i.e. emanations).[54] Once again, Wirszubski identifies the questionable readings of Kabbalah source materials:

> The superposition of the relatively late distinction between speculative and practical Kabbalah upon the bipartite division of Kabbalah into the science of *sefirot* and the science of names produced Pico's first division of Kabbala "in scientiam sephiroth et semot tanquam in practicam et speculativam […into the science of *sefirot* and *shemot*, as it were into practical and speculative science]."[55]

Thus, whether Pico thought of the science of *shemot* (i.e. names) as practical and the science of *sefirot* (i.e. emanations) as speculative, or vice versa, he nonetheless affirmed a division that was neither longstanding nor universal in Jewish Kabbalistic tradition.

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[53] Wirszubski gives the Latin as: "Dico igitur nunc quod hec sapientia cabale oculta quidem est a multitudine doctorum nostrum qui exercentur in sapientia alta nostra que dicitur Talmud et dividitur quidem in duas partes in universali que sunt sciencia nominis dei Tetragramaton per modum decem numerationum que vocantur plante inter quas qui separat diciur truncare plantas. Et hi sunt qui revelant secretum unitatis. Secunda pars est scientia magni nominis per viam viginti duaraum licterarum a quibus et ab earum punctis et ab earum accentibus composita sunt nomina et caracteres seu sigilla que nomina invocata sunt que locuntur cum prophetis in somnis et per hurim at tumim et per spiritum sanctum et per prophetas"(134).

[54] Most basically, the *sefirot* are understood in the Kabbalah as emanations of God. It is difficult, however, to define the term any more specifically without then excluding schools of Kabbalistic thought that disagree about the nature of those emanations. One such disagreement, for example, is whether God, in this act of emanation, "shines forth" in light only or in substance. Thus, the simplest definition, while perhaps wanting in specificity, avoids unnecessary exclusion of many legitimate contemporaneous views of the nature of the *sefirot*.

[55] Wirszubski 135.

Moreover, he also superimposed his own (Christian) division between practical and speculative on top of that fraught choice of Judaic source accounts.

For this reason, it seems prudent to assume that Pico's division of Kabbalah into speculative and practical sciences along the axis of a separate division between *shemot* (i.e. names) and *sefirot* (i.e. emanations) on the basis of one or two late Jewish sources should be regarded as the effect of Pico's projection of a Christian dichotomy between magic and theology onto Jewish tradition. After all, what was self-evident to Pico (namely, a distinction between speculative theology and practical magic), was by no means self-evident to all Jewish Kabbalists. However, where Pico saw efficacious names, we suggest, he thought to recognize "magic" because of his familiarity with medieval discourse on Solomonic demon compulsion – he was superimposing several generations' accounts, thereby skewing them and creating a very particular reading of his the Jewish Kabbalah for his Christian readers.

Returning to our main argument, Pico identified in the Jewish Kabbalah, a "practical science" (*magia naturalis*) regardless of "whatever other Kabbalists say." In this move, moreover, most scholars agree that he associated the science of names (*shemot*) with the practical (i.e. *magia naturalis*). If this is true, then it potentially represents the same "magical" use of divine names associated with the apocryphal Solomon narrative going back to antiquity. Moreover, as Wirszubski further remarks, "The theurgic or magical use of divine names in Judaism is older than the earliest known

instance of the ten *sefirot*."[56] Yet how are we to read Pico's conclusions dealing explicitly with the *Shem ha-Mephorash*? There are only a very few such conclusions included in his texts (suggesting again that he was more interested in his contemporaneous readers than in faithful accounts of the past). Two of them, conclusions 56 and 57 of Pico's "Seventy-one Cabalistic Conclusions According to My Own Opinion, Strongly Confirming the Christian Religion Using the Hebrew Wisemen's Own Principles," are as follows:

> 11>56. Anyone who knows how to unfold the quarternarius into the denarius will have the method, if he is skilled in the Cabala, of deducing the name of seventy-two letters from the ineffable name.
>
> 11>57. From the last conclusion anyone knowledgeable in formal arithmetic can understand that to operate through the shem ha-mephorash is proper to the rational nature.[57]

Pico's assertion in his conclusion 57 that "to operate through the shem ha-mephorash is proper to the rational nature" certainly serves the program he had already begun of legitimizing *magia naturalis* since his solution to the problem of causality is the power of God himself rather than demons. Unfortunately, however, it does not clarify what sort of operations Pico had in mind.

However, Pico's previous conclusion potentially reveals the most about the relationship of his Kabbalistic theses to Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*, for their respective accounts of uses of Kabbalah are quite different. Conclusion 56 involves *gematria*, a Kabbalistic method of interpreting Hebrew scripture (in this case, the *Shem ha-*

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[56] Chaim Wirszubski, *Pico Della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989) 135.

[57] 11>56. Qui sciuerit explicare quaternarium in denarium habebit modum, si sit peritus Cabalae, deducendi ex nomine ineffabili nomen .lxxii. litterarum. Farmer 885. 11>57. Per praecedentum conclusionem potest intelligens in arithmetica formali intelligere quod operari per *scemamphoras* est proprium rationalis naturae. Farmer 885.

Mephorash, YHWH) by calculating the numerical values of words based on those of their constituent letters. One unfolds the quaternarius into the denarius thus: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10. Pico's meaning is that one can add the numerical equivalents of the letters of the ineffable name YHVH, (10 + 5 + 6 + 5 = 26), and through further operations known to those "skilled" in Kabbalah derive the name of seventy-two letters. As we will see, Reuchlin's use of "Kabbalah" in *De Verbo Mirifico* is nothing of the sort. His derivation of the name of God is a poetic exegesis and a Christian apologia. As a result of the obvious differences, we may conclude that Reuchlin's early interest in the Kabbalah was, at the very least, anything but gematric. In fact, as we will argue below, it bears a far greater resemblance to the Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics on the name of Jesus as the ultimate divine name, which we have discussed above in chapter one.

Pico's Influence on Reuchlin

Like Pico's Conclusions 56 and 57, Reuchlin's book-length triologue, *De Verbo Mirifico*, is also based on the idea of the Tetragrammaton or *Shem ha-Mephorash* – the ineffable and efficacious name of God. Reuchlin's incorporation of Kabbalah in *De Verbo Mirifico* will be discussed in greater detail below, but it suffices here to say first of all that it does not involve *gematria* in anything approaching the level of mathematical sophistication of "unfolding the quaternarius into the denarius." Rather, it is much more a poetical exegesis in which Reuchlin builds upon the idea of the efficacious power of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* or Tetragrammaton and eventually reveals that the eponymous "wonderworking word" in *De Verbo Mirifico* is not the Tetragrammaton mathematically

unfolded into the name of seventy-two letters, but the Tetragrammaton transformed symbolically-poetically into Pentagrammaton through the incarnation of Jesus.

The transformation results from Reuchlin's Christian Cabalistic exegesis of the Tetragrammaton, YHWH. In place of the Tetragrammaton, Reuchlin proposes a Pentagrammaton (YHSWH) under the impression that his alternation has changed the name from Yahweh to Yeshua (Jesus) in Hebrew. Though irretrievably mistaken (Yeshua, in Hebrew is spelled יהוש or "YSWH," and thus, is just as much a Tetragrammaton as YHWH),[58] Reuchlin's explanation reflected his (and Pico's) interest in the potential of Kabbalistic-type exegesis within a Christian context. According to Reuchlin's exegetical reasoning, the insertion of the "ש" (*shin*) to the Tetragrammaton not only renders the ineffable name of God pronounceable (as Yeshua, i.e. "Jesus"), but also symbolically represented the formless taking form: God becomes incarnate and thus comprehensible through the birth of Jesus.[59]

Notably, the point at which Reuchlin arrives through his exegesis is virtually the same as that of Justin Martyr in his *Dialogue with Trypho* (discussed in chapter 1). Recall Justin's argument with Trypho:

> For every demon, when exorcised in the name of this very Son of God […] is overcome and subdued. But though you exorcise any demon in the name of any of those who were amongst you—either kings, or righteous men, or prophets, or patriarchs—it will not be subject to you. But if any of you exorcise it in [the name

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[58] Fellow humanist theologian, Lefèvre d'Étaples points out the error in his *Quincuplex Psalterium of 1508*. See: François Secret, *Les Kabbalistes Chrétiens De La Renaissance* (Neully S/Seine: Arma Artis, 1985) 136f.

[59] Schmidt-Biggemann offers a useful discussion of the Pentagrammaton in the writings of Pico and Reuchlin. See: Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis: Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011) 96-99.

> of] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, it will perhaps be subject to you.[60]

Like Justin Martyr and the other early Christian apologists, Reuchlin simply proposes a better "magical" name – not a treatise on the *sefirot*. At its core, his *De Verbo Mirifico* is part of the late antique apologetic and *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics that sought to undermine the figure of Solomon and replace it with that of Jesus through performative exorcisms "in the name of Jesus."

Despite the clear similarities between the sort of late antique Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics and apologia which were discussed in chapter one above, there is an important difference between those and the models proposed by Pico and Reuchlin. In the examples from Christian antiquity, the demons are crucial to the logic, but in the Renaissance works of Pico and Reuchlin (after the medieval establishment of distinct theological discourses of magic and exorcism) demons are not directly mentioned. Rather, in their theories of *magia naturalis*, it appears to be nature itself that is compelled by the name of God, whether that name be "Tetragrammaton" in Pico or "Pentagrammaton" in Reuchlin. Recall that Ficino's solution to the problem of causality is a cosmological force of love that can be aided through judicious application of the magical art: "For where anything is lacking in a natural relationship, art supplies it through vapors, numbers, figures, and qualities at the proper times."[61] Presumably this must also apply to the name(s) of God (including "Jesus") and would account for the

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[60] George Reith, Marcus Dods, and B. P. Pratten *The Writings of Justin Martyr and Athenagoras* (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1867) 205.

[61] Ficino and Jayne 127.

apocryphal Solomon narrative, which, as we will see in the following section, Reuchlin incorporates explicitly into his *De Verbo Mirifico*.

Yet, ultimately, neither Pico in his *Theses* nor Reuchlin in his *De Verbo Mirifico* appears to have had a very firm grasp on the Jewish Kabbalistic tradition. Preeminent scholar of the Jewish Kabbalah, Moshe Idel, tells us that, "Pico's *Theses*, his most important kabbalistic composition, contains a very heterogeneous selection of subject matter and a relatively small amount of Kabbalah."[62] Likewise, Charles Zika, one of the first scholars to give serious attention to *De Verbo Mirifico*, comments concerning that work, "it contributes little to an understanding of Reuchlin's intellectual concerns to describe the DVM as the first stage in the development of his Hebraic and Kabbalistic studies."[63] Thus, regardless of Pico's divisions of the Kabbalah and regardless of whether he thought that the science of names (*shemot*) was practical or speculative, we are left with the question of the possible extent of his influence on the thinking of Johannes Reuchlin, whose *De Verbo Mirifico* at least, as Zika observes, does not really contain much Kabbalah either. While it is true that by 1517, when Reuchlin published his *De Arte Cabalistica*, he was one of the foremost Christian Hebraists in Europe (if not *the* foremost), in 1494 when he published his *De Verbo Mirifico*, he actually knew very little about Hebrew or the Jewish Kabbalah.[64]

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[62] Moshe Idel, "The Magical and Neoplatonic Interpretations of the Kabbalah in the Renaissance," *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, Ed. David B. Ruderman (New York: New York UP, 1992) 107-69 here 111.

[63] Charles Zika, "Reuchlin's De Verbo Mirifico and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 39 (1976) 104-138, here 105.

[64] For some discussions of the failings of Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* as a work of "Christianized Jewish Kabbalah" (as opposed to "Christian Kabbalah"), see: Robert J. Wilkinson *Tetragrammaton: Western Christians and the Hebrew Name of God: from the Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015) 319-323.

Here, historical connections amplify my point. It had only been four years earlier, in 1490, that Reuchlin had met Pico in Italy. Certainly, the two would have spoken about what Pico had already written. By that time, both Pico's *Theses* (1486) and the *Apologia* (1487) had been already been published. We can only speculate as to what else they discussed, however, and the fact remains that Reuchlin's incorporation of the Kabbalah into his writings is different from Pico's. It bears and even greater resemblance to late antique and medieval "Solomonic" traditions of demon compulsion. Published four years after their meeting, Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494) focuses on the wonder-working effects of a single word of five letters, not the gematrical process of deriving other names from it. Thus, the question is: How did Reuchlin arrive at this understanding of the Kabbalah?

The simplest and most likely explanation would be that he in fact got the idea from Pico. In the fourteenth of Pico's seventy-two conclusions on the Kabbalah, Pico had actually argued that the insertion of the *shin* "ש" into the Tetragrammaton represents the descent of the fiery Holy Spirit into the fourfold realm of matter – the incarnation of God in human flesh. Pico held that the addition of the *shin* made the previously ineffable YHVH pronounceable.[65] The possible connection is obvious enough – Reuchlin appears

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[65] Schmidt-Biggemann cites Pico's exegesis on the "ש" (*shin*) as the "first step in his attempt at Christian cabala." Pico arrives at the "ש" (*shin*) in his *Conclusio* 11>14. "By the letter <ש>, that is, *shin*, which mediates in the name of Jesus, it is indicated to us Cabalistically that the world then rested perfectly, as though in its perfection, when *Yod* was conjoined with *Vav* – which happened in Christ, who was the true Son of God, and man." It is interesting to note that Pico's process presupposes a different spelling of Jesus' name than Reuchlin's. The former opts for *Yeshu*, and the latter, *Yeshua*. In Pico's exegesis, the *shin* is arrived at because it is the only letter present in Jesus' name that is not also present in the Tetragrammaton (יהוה). *Yod* and the *Vav* are present in both. The significance, then, of Pico's explanation in *Conclusio* 11>14 of the *shin*'s mediation between the *Yod* and the *Vav* is that the *Shin* represents Jesus, and the *Yod* and the *Vav* represent God and the world, respectively, as Jesus mediates between God and the world. Wilhelm Schmidt Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis: Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011) 94.

simply to have expounded upon one of Pico's exegetical ideas. However, it does not necessarily follow that Reuchlin adopted all of Pico's ideas about a Christian Cabala, nor that he developed the idea in the same way that Pico would have. For instance, Reuchlin's exegesis on the Pentagrammaton (which must belong to the science of *shemot* if it is to be regarded as Kabbalah at all within Pico's divisions) does not appear to be in any way derived from or include the gematria that Pico describes in his Cabalistic theses (56 and 57). Rather, it is something else – something seemingly more related to the Christian discourse of demon compulsion derived from the apocryphal Solomon narrative, albeit without explicit mention of demons.[66] That is, Reuchlin may have been inspired by Pico, but he has approached the problem of Aquinas' demonology differently.

The challenge of removing demons from the chain of causality in theories of magic is already familiar. Before Reuchlin wrote his *De Verbo Mirifico,* both Ficino and Pico had already tried to disentangle inquiry into and experimentation with causality as "magic" from Aquinas' explicit or implicit demonic pact by replacing Aquinas' particular definition of demons. Ficino had attempted to do so by proposing a different, nondemonic, causality. Pico had skirted the issue.

Reuchlin, however, writing in 1494, had the advantage of having witnessed both of his predecessors' attempts and difficulties. From his temporal vantage point nearly eight years after the publication of the *Apologia* Pico was forced to write for his *900*

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[66] One need not look far for examples of ritual use of the divine name of Jesus in the context of otherwise "Solomonic demon compulsion." Véronèse identified several in his study of 9 texts of "Solomonic" magical pseudepigrapha. He writes, "Jesus, Christus, or Jesus Christus is also widely used (ninety occurrences). Being particular to the Christian world, it does not appear in *Liber Bileth* or in *Liber Razielis*. The translation of this latter text from Hebrew to Castilian and Latin appears not to have involved any effort at Christianization. Jesus Christus appears in all the other texts, however, with the majority of uses found in Clavicula (58%)." See: Julien Véronèse, "God's Names and Their Uses in the Books of Magic Attributed to King Solomon," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 5.1 (2010): 30-50, here 33.

Theses and 5 years after Ficino was accused of heresy for his assertions in the third book of *De Vita Libri Tres*, Reuchlin no doubt recognized the familiar concern of the late antique Christian apologists and medieval Christian theologians for controlling (limiting) authorization for efficacious ritual (whether "magical" or "religious"). Even if Ficino's theory of *magia naturalis* and Pico's of a science of practical Cabala were couched in perfectly Orthodox terms, they would have been rendered unacceptable because the very existence of legitimate (i.e. non-diabolical) "magical" power outside of the control of the Church would contradict its self-styled position as the only source of truth. In short, whether it was natural or not, no pagan or Jewish magic could ever be allowed to be legitimate (i.e. both valid and licit) because it was not contingent upon the sacrifice, death, and resurrection of Jesus, on which the Church was the ultimate authority. To draw a parallel to Origen's vague but firm objection, "*Sed ipsi qui utuntur adjurationibus illis, aliquoties nec idoneis constitutis libris utuntur: quibusdam autem et de Hebraeo acceptis adjurant daemonia*."[67]

As we have seen, however, there had been other theories of magic available before Aquinas. In the cases of both Ficino and Pico, because of the lack of contingency on Jesus (the source of the institutional Church's authority, and thus, power), the *condition of the performer*, "purity" as presence-of-grace is missing, is missing from their theories of magic. Each of them has effectively proposed a different *condition of the performer*, some version of what we might call "knowledge-of-nature" or "knowledge-of-

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[67] "It is customary to adjure demons with adjurations written by Solomon. But they themselves who use these adjurations sometimes use books not properly constituted; indeed they even adjure demons with some books taken from Hebrew." See: Mattheum comm. ser. (tract. 33) 110, Migne, *PG* vol. 13 1757; McCown, *Testament*, p. 94; *JPOS* 2 (1922) 9. See also: Duling (1983), 949.

truth." It is outside the scope of the present study to attempt to determine whether their changes to the condition of the performer also represent a spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity." However, one speculates that they do not, because of the dependent relationship of "purity" to hegemonic structures (e.g. the Jewish Temple or the institutional medieval Church). The value of "purity" as authorizing *condition of the performer* is undermined when it becomes possible to self-authorize.

It is for this reason that Reuchlin's choice to make his theory of magic not just inclusive of Jesus (as Pico had done), but rather absolutely contingent on Jesus, as we will see. In so doing, he has tied his version of that generation's argument about causality and knowledge into the institutional Church as he knew it. Reuchlin does so by deploying resources from the tradition of Solomonic magic that Pico and Ficino did not.

Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* and the *Liber Razielis*

To answer the question of what actually Reuchlin used as his additional source, in this section we propose a connection between the *Liber Razielis*, a medieval manual of Solomonic magic, and Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*. While it is known that Reuchlin at one point owned at least part of the *Liber Razielis*,[68] any connection between the two texts is necessarily tenuous, since at the time that Reuchlin wrote and published his *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494), the *Liber Razielis* circulated in multiple differing versions, and it is not known which version(s) Reuchlin had or had access to. Nevertheless, what Malinowski has isolated as the *rite*, the *formula*, and the *condition of the performer* do

[68] Reuchlin owned at least part of the *Liber Razielis* See Franz Posset, *Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522): A Theological Biography* (Berlin: Gruyter, Walter de, & Co, 2015) 653.

remain consistent among the various extant versions of the *Liber Razielis* that are known to have circulated at the time. In consequence, a fruitful comparison is possible with Reuchlin's use of the *rite*, the *formula*, and the *condition of the performer* in *De Verbo Mirifico*. In this comparison, we can recover Reuchlin's distinctive logic as an advance beyond that of Pico and Ficino, albeit one executed with their work in mind.

By aligning our comparison in this way, we will recover *De Verbo Mirifico* as an attempt on Reuchlin's part to rehabilitate magic – to make it a legitimate, non-heretical field of inquiry, as Ficino and Pico before him had tried. At the same time, he also tried to create a theologically acceptable theory of magic (causality) that could replace or at least coexist with Aquinas' theory of magic as demonic intervention and idolatrous demonic pact. As we will see, like Ficino before him, Reuchlin avoids directly contradicting Aquinas' demonology and argues instead for the existence of an additional, licit form of magic not contingent upon demonic pacts.

The prefatory letter to *De Verbo Mirifico*, which is included in the first publication, is addressed to Johannes Dalberg, the Bishop of Worms and Chancellor of the University of Heidelberg. It provides a statement of Reuchlin's intentions and establishes the outline of his strategy from the very beginning of his work:

> Certain diligent explorers of arcane matters […] whom the recondite powers of words, the abstruse energies of utterances and the divine characters of secret names excite, have been detected in our age (in so far as I judge it correctly) to draw away considerably from the most ancient tracks of the first philosophers and err gravely concerning the operations of mysteries, most full of wonderful effects; and especially for this reason, that either because of the fleeting obscurity of figures which have been obliterated, or perverse and faulty alterations by

> librarians, these symbols of that sacred philosophy and most venerable seals of supernatural powers, have not been able to be read, let alone understood.[69]

From the above quote, it is clear that Reuchlin intends to write an apologia for "magic" in terms familiar to a long-standing tradition of explaining "causality." What he describes – the powers of words, the energies of utterances, and secret names – can hardly refer to anything else or even be meant allegorically, since he goes on refer to "operations of mysteries" and "wonderful effects." Moreover, by attributing the grave errors of "certain diligent explorers of arcane matters" to problems of language, which, he suggests, are the result of a failure to copy, read, or understand correctly, Reuchlin isolates the *formula* in the theology of his argument. Thus he casts the "magical" *formulae* – whatever they might be – as deficient from the very beginning of his text. Reuchlin's proposed solution, as we will see, is a new *formula* – the name of Jesus, albeit in Hebrew –, which thus addresses the weakness we have addressed in the theories of magic proposed by both Ficino and Pico, for by proposing a new *formula* – YHSWH, the Pentagrammaton – Reuchlin proposes a theory of magic that is contingent upon Christian truth.

This part of our comparison – the *formula* that Reuchlin develops– is well researched. Briefly, Reuchlin argues that, as the language of God's original revelation, the Hebrew language does have a special efficacious potential, but, that, since the time of the incarnation of Jesus, the *Shem ha-Mephorash* is no longer the *verbum mirificum* ("wonder-working word") referred to in the title. The Tetragrammaton (YHWH) has been superseded and replaced by the Pentagrammaton (YHSWH) as the efficacious name of

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[69] Zika (1976), 23.

God. This is the logic that has been traced in other studies.[70] In consequence, we focus the efforts of our comparison here primarily on the significance of the *rite* and the *condition of the performer* in each text, working within the logics we have been tracing.

Significantly, in *De Verbo Mirifico*, Reuchlin stipulates belief – conversion to Christianity – as the requisite *condition of the performer*. This move allows Reuchlin to offer *De Verbo Mirifico* as an apologia akin to the late antique Christian apologiae of Justin Martyr and the anonymous author of the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* in which the efficacious power of the older *formulae* (e.g. names) is lost with the institution of the new covenant (i.e. Jesus). More than this, by stipulating conversion – belief – as the requisite *condition of the performer*, he also embraces the effect – if not the mechanism – of Aquinas' demonology. Because Reuchlin's theory of magic is contingent not only upon "Jesus" as *formula*, but also upon belief in Jesus as *condition of the performer*, he limits the liceity of efficacious ritual to its exercise under the auspices of the institutional Church.

Yet Reuchlin's apologia for magic in *De Verbo Mirifico* is at least partially open-ended. While the majority of the text is devoted to the *formula* and *the condition of the performer*, Reuchlin offers very little description of the *rite*. Cleverly, he has couched the revelation of the *formula* as reward for achieving the requisite *condition of the performer* as believer. The efficacious Pentagrammaton is not revealed to the initiates until they

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[70] See, for example: Charles Zika, "Reuchlin's De Verbo Mirifico and the Magic Debate of the Late Fifteenth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976): 104-138. See also: Robert J. Wilkinson, *Tetragrammaton: Western Christians and the Hebrew Name of God: from the Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015). See also: Chaim Wirszubski, *Pico Della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989). See also: Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann, *Philosophia Perennis: Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2011) especially 59-128.

have embraced the "truth" of Christianity. However, the *rite* – the ritual application of the *formula* – is only very vaguely described. This is of particular interest because of the significance of the *rite* in Aquinas' theory of magic, which he determines must necessarily involve idolatry and a demonic pact. Clearly, this is Reuchlin's way of not engaging directly with Aquinas. Yet, as is evident in the prefatory letter we have already cited, Reuchlin's view of the "secret powers of names" as "symbols of that sacred philosophy and most venerable seals of supernatural powers" seems quite favorable. The problem, for Reuchlin, is "the fleeting obscurity of figures which have been obliterated, or perverse and faulty alterations by librarians." Reuchlin refrains from issuing any blanket criticisms of the *rites* in those texts, even, as we will see, when discussing some of them specifically. In this, Reuchlin attempts to satisfy both the institutionalized Church and the new desiderata identified by Pico and Reuchlin in their attempts to move beyond Aquinas.

Though Reuchlin does not press the argument he so carefully sets up to its logical end, it clearly implies that he could reclaim as legitimate (i.e. licit) a number of existing texts of ritual magic by explaining that the figures and names (to which William of Auvergne so vehemently objected as communications with demons) were not original to the text, but rather, had been "obliterated," or "perversely altered." Whatever is objectionable to the theologians could be dismissed as a corruption of the text resulting from insufficient knowledge of the original language(s) – a nice dodge to the questions of Church authority/authorization that Aquinas had highlighted. Of course, this strategy could be applied to any number of texts – pagan as well as Jewish –, but as the narrative

of *De Verbo Mirifico* unfolds, it becomes increasingly clear what sort of text it is that interests Reuchlin.

The triologue format of the text between a pagan, a Jew, and a Christian allows Reuchlin to separate himself from any implicit objections even as he makes statements that approach the limits of the acceptable. Reuchlin puts the words in the mouth of the pagan Sidonius, and not in that of his alter-ego, the Christian Capnion:

> [Josephus] says indeed in his eighth book of 'Antiquities' that for the good of mankind Solomon had invented an art to be used against daemons, spells against sickness, and a method of conjuration.[71]

and still more when, again in the voice of Sidonius, he confirms:

> Robert, Bacon, Abanus, Picatrix and the whole council of masters could appreciate and teach none of this properly, as it should be done, chiefly because they did not know the languages.[72]

Once again, the strong implication is that what is wrong with these texts (as they were known at the end of the fifteenth century and implicitly working against those following Aquinas) is primarily the corrupted state of the language. By contrast, Reuchlin has surprisingly little to say about the nature of the *rite* in these texts, a fact to which we will return below.

In fact, Sidonius' comments uphold the basic idea of "secret names" and the "powers of words" which Reuchlin first associates with the apocryphal Solomon

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[71] Reuchlin's original Latin reads: "Ait enim ille antiquitatum octavo, Salomonem contra daemones artem ad utilitatem hominum et eorum curas invenisse, incantatmenta contra aegritudines instituisse, modum etiam coniurationum." See Johannes Reuchlin, *De Verbo Mirifico: (1494) = Das Wundertätige Wort* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1996) 122. The English translation is from Michael Mitchell's *Hidden Mutualities: Faustian Themes from Gnostic Origins to the Postcolonial* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006) 35.

[72] Reuchlin's Latin reads: "Nihil igitur horum Roberthus et Bacon et Abanus et Picatrix et concilius magistrorum, vel maxime ob linguarum ignorantiam ad amissim, ut opportet, tenere atque docere, …" 124. Once again, the English translation is from Mitchell (35).

narrative through reference to Josephus' *Antiquities*, and then through reference to a list of specific medieval magical texts. Each of the names Reuchlin lists through the voice of Sidonius is the supposed author of a medieval manual or ritual magic associated with the Solomonic tradition of demon compulsion. "Robert" probably refers here to Rupertus Lombardus (dates not known), to whom, along with Roger Bacon (c. 1219/20 – 1292), a work of Solomonic demon compulsion known as *De nigromancia* was attributed.[73] The inclusion of "Picatrix" in this list reflects the late medieval misconception that what is in fact the title of the work was the name of its author. We have previously discussed the connections with the apocryphal Solomon narrative in *Picatrix*. "Abanus" refers to Pietro D'Abano (c. 1257-1316) who was thought to have been the author of a medieval work known as "*Heptameron*." Joseph Peterson has argued that the *Heptameron* shows signs of being indebted to the *Liber Razielis*.[74] This brings us to our discussion of the *Liber Razielis* as the unmentioned but more probable direct source for Reuchlin.

Although in his later magico-theological work, *De Arte Cabalistica*, Reuchlin makes a clear reference to the *Liber Razielis* by incorporating part of its frame story into his description of the origin of Kabbalah,[75] he makes no such overt reference to it in the early *De Verbo Mirifico*. Clearly, Reuchlin was aware of other medieval manuals of ritual magic, as evidenced by Sidonius' list, yet, as we have said, he is known to have owned at

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[73] There is a modern edition of this text in English translation: Roger Bacon and Michael-Albion Macdonald, *De Nigromancia* (Gillette, N.J: Heptangle Books, 1988).

[74] Peterson writes, "Note that the theoretical framework for the text is indebted to *Sepher Razielis*, though redacted or adapted." See: Joseph H. Peterson, *Peter De Abano: Heptameron, or Magical Elements* (N.P.: Esoteric Archives, 1998. Web. 29 July 2017. <http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/heptamer.htm>).

[75] Johannes Reuchlin, *On the Art of the Kabbalah =: De Arte Cabalistica* (Lincoln [etc.: University of Nebraska Press, 1993) 69,79,83. For more discussion about Reuchlin's incorporation of the Raziel narrative, see: Schmidt-Biggemann 98.

least part of copy of the *Liber Razielis*. However, Reuchlin's attested ownership of the text is not the only reason to suspect its influence on his early magico-religious thought.

This text is of particular interest to us because it enjoyed a unique status among manuals of ritual magic at the time that Reuchlin wrote *De Verbo Mirifico*. Preeminent scholar of the Jewish Kabbalah, Moshe Idel, has remarked that, as far as we know, *Sefer Raziel* is the only major document written in the first stage of the Spanish Kabbalah that was translated into any European language before the Renaissance.[76] Thus, the *Sefer Raziel* in Latin translation would have been one of the few Jewish texts that Reuchlin (and Pico before him) would have been able to read without the aid of a translator when Reuchlin composed *De Verbo Mirifico* early on in his study Hebrew and the Jewish Kabbalah.

Like *Picatrix*, the *Sefer Raziel* had been translated into Latin (as *Liber Razielis*) and was circulating in Europe already in the thirteenth century as a result of the interests of Alfonso X ("the Wise") of Castile, León, and Galicia (1221-1284), who ordered those, and numerous other foreign texts translated.[77] As we have already mentioned, both texts were well known at the end of the fifteenth century. They are, in fact, the first two texts of the 38 texts of "demonic" magic described by Trithemius in his *Antipalus*. Moreover, both texts make overt and explicit reference to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's

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[76] Idel 233.

[77] Other important translations include the *Siete Partidas* and the *Lapidario*. For further discussion of the translations produced at Alfonso's behest, see: Francis Tobienne, *The Position of Magic in Selected Medieval Spanish Texts* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008) 50-51.

power over demons. The frame narrative of some of the Latin versions of the *Liber Razielis* even claims Solomonic authorship.[78]

Scholars have already demonstrated the circulation of these texts in the Italian Renaissance. Geoffrey Pearce attributes Ficino's knowledge astrological magic to *Picatrix*,[79] and Frances Yates notes that there was a copy of *Picatrix* in Pico della Mirandola's library.[80] Scholars have also demonstrated that a number of other pieces of Solomonic magical pseudepigrapha were read by the circle of Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence and noted that several authors mention the *Sefer Razi'el*, which they attributed to King Solomon.[81] Nicolas of Cusa (1401-1464) cites a book "qui Salomoni inscribitur et vocantur Sepher Raziel" in the first part of his *Sermo I, De nominibus*.[82] Yet unlike *Picatrix*, which was "pagan" (Arabic astrology), the *Liber Razielis* was Jewish. It was possibly the only piece of Jewish Kabbalah circulating in Latin before Reuchlin began his studies of Hebrew, and Reuchlin owned a copy.

What little is known about the *Liber Razielis* manuscript that Reuchlin owned is gleaned from a letter to Reuchlin dated July 20, 1515, from his friend, Lorenz Behaim. In the letter Behaim reminds Reuchlin of Reuchlin's having gifted him the seventh book of

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[78] Don Karr offers a useful survey of the so-called 'Solomonic cycle" of magic texts and some discussion of the problems of determining exactly what makes (or doesn't make) a ritual text "Solomonic." See: Donn Karr and Stephen Skinner, *Sepher Raziel, Also Known As Liber Salomonis: A 1564 English Grimoire from Sloane Ms 3826* (Singapore: Golden Hoard Press, 2010) 25-47.

[79] Yates 73. See also "Ficino and Astrology," in Michael Shepherd, *Friend to Mankind: Marsilio Ficino, 1433-1499* (London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 1999) 109.

[80] Yates observes, "The Latin *Picatrix* was certainly circulating a good deal in the Italian Renaissance" (50).

[81] See: Moshe Idel, "The Magical and Neoplatonic Interpretations of the Kabbalah in the Renaissance." *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, edited by David B. Ruderman (New York: New York University Press, 1992) pp. 107–169, here 112.

[82] "Cusanus cites a book 'qui Salomoni inscribitur et vocantur Sepher Raziel' in the first part of his *Sermo I, De nominibus* (Cusanus, *Opera omnia, vol. 17, Sermones I.1,* ed. R. Haubst et al. [Hamburg, 1970], p. 6.).

the *Liber Razielis* during their travels together in Rome in 1498 in search of Hebrew books.[83] While the letter would seem to provide very little to go on, two details are significant. The first is the date. By 1498, Reuchlin was either done with his copy of the manuscript or had a copy to spare. This alone does not prove that he had consulted it in the composition of *De Verbo Mirifico*, but, because of another detail, it does give us some insight into the kind of texts Reuchlin probably had at the time he wrote *De Verbo Mirifico* a few years earlier in 1494.

The second detail is Behaim's reference to the seventh book specifically. The *Liber Razielis* consists of seven "books," each of which is named individually. Sophie Page informs us that the seventh book of the original Alfonsine translation (or compilation) was substituted soon after its translation for the *Liber virtutis*, which was an abridged version of an appended work called *Liber Semaforas*[84]:

> Contemporaneously with the construction of Alfonso's volume, a *Liber institutionis Razielis*, with the *incipit* "In prima huius proemii parte de angulis tractemus," was condemned in the influential *Speculum astronomiae*. On the basis

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[83] Posset suggests that, "Reuchlin was perhaps the first to have retrieved it from the tradition of the Jews or he picked it from a Latin translation, namely the *Liber Razielis* (in seven parts). Since he did not have much use for it because of its content of 'magic,' he had given it away, i.e. the seventh book, whereby it is not clear whether he possessed the other six parts or not. The recipient of his gift was Lorenz Behaim with whom Reuchlin had roamed around Rome in 1498 in search of Hebrew books. When Behaim returned from Rome to a position at the main church in Bamberg he reminded Reuchlin in his letter of 20 July 1515 of their shared experience in Rome and the fact that Reuchlin had given him the seventh part of the *Book Raziel* which he liked to carry with him always and everywhere" (653). See also: *Reuchlin Briefwechsel* III, 236-241, lines 17-20 (#272), and note 10 on p. 237, as cited in Posset 653.

[84] Sophie Page, "Uplifting Souls: The Liber De Essentia Spiritum and the Liber Razielis," *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (University Park: Penn State Univ, 2015) 79-112, here 82."This Alfonsine *Liber Razielis* is structured in the form of seven books said to have been brought together by Solomon, to which a number of related texts from the Solomonic and Hermetic magical traditions were added as appendices. Each book focuses on a different element of magical practice: the *Liber clavis* on astrology, the *Liber Ale* on natural magic, the *Liber thymiama* on suffumigations, the *Liber temporum* on angels associated with divisions of time, the *Liber mundicie et abstentie* with cleanliness and abstinence, and the *Liber Sameyn* on the angels of heaven. Two different versions of the seventh book circulated: the *Liber magice*, which focused on image magic, and the *Liber virtutis*, and abridged version of the first appended work, the *Liber Semaforas* (Semhemaforas, Semiphoras, Seminafora, Semforas), which was concerned with names of power. The preface to the Alfonsine *Liber Razielis* cites a Hebrew original for the compilation, the 'Çeffer Raziel, qoud vult dicere in ebrayco *Volumen secretorum Dei*,' although it is likely that the structure is partly if not entirely a creation of Alfonso himself and his translators."

> of the *Speculum astronomiae*'s focus on image magic, this work has been identified with the *Liber magice*. It therefore seems likely that the *Liber magice* was replaced at some point with the *Liber Semaforas* by an influential copyist in order to avert criticism, and the names of the books themselves can be viewed as expressive of this aim.[85]

Given this history of the seventh book of the *Liber Razielis*, as well as their mutual interest in Hebrew books, it seems likely that the gift Behaim received from Reuchlin was some version of the *Liber Semaforas* rather than of the original *Liber magice*.

An investigation of the content of the *Liber vertutis*, the abridged version of the *Liber Semamforas*, would appear to confirm our suspicions. Its brief introduction explains that the "semiforas" were given to Adam in paradise and describes their various applications according to Adam's uses of them. With the first, he spoke to God in paradise; with the second to angels, with the third to devils, with the fourth to men and animals. With the fifth, he spoke to plants and growing things; with the sixth, the elements. With the seventh, we are told, he spoke to the sun, the moon, and the planets.[86] The various "semiforas," as they are given in the text, mostly appear to be litanies of simple *verba ignota* with an admixture of a few recognizable Hebrew names.[87] These names (as the author sometimes refers to them) are supposed to be derived from the Tetragrammaton, but there is no indication as to how this was done.

Given the limited information, a comparison between the *Liber Virtutis* (i.e. the seventh book of the *Liber Razielis*) and Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* cannot be conclusively demonstrate whether, or to what extent, Reuchlin was influenced by all or

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[85] Page 82.
[86] Karr 222.
[87] See, for example, Karr's effort to make sense of the third Semiforas: "Adona[i], Sabaoth, Adonay, Cados [Kadosh], Addona, Annora" (223).

any part of the *Liber Razielis*. However, that is not the only possible value of the comparison. The comparison is valuable in its own right, for it points to the similarity between Reuchlin's first work of "Christian Cabala" and the medieval discourse of Solomonic magic. Thus, whether or not Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* can be demonstrated to be a direct product of the discourse, it would have been at least recognizable within it.

It is important to note that not all scholars would consider *De Verbo Mirifico* a work of Christian Kabbalah. The opinion among scholars that *De Verbo Mirifico* is not Kabbalistic results from the fact that Reuchlin's two magico-theological works are quite different and fall on opposite sides of an epistemological divide in modern scholarship. Kabbalah scholar Moshe Idel provides a description of that divide that helps to clarify the difficult position of *De Verbo Mirifico* in modern scholarship:

> The dominant scholarly definition of Kabbalah regards its crucial component as a concern with the ten divine powers, the ten sefirot. In line with this view, Jewish Kabbalah emerged in Languedoc in the last decades of the twelfth century, and Christian Kabbalah in the final decades of the thirteenth. But if we turn to another way of defining the Kabbalah, found already in the eleventh century, as an esoteric tradition concerning divine names, the situation becomes much more complex. Indeed some passages dealing with divine names recur in Christian texts recur in Christian texts early in the thirteenth century[…][88]

Idel's comments draw our attention to an important fact that is important for Reuchlin's case: the definition of Kabbalah as necessarily – and even exclusively – pertaining to the *sefirot* is a modern scholarly convention, not necessarily a historic one. Reuchlin's later *De Arte Cabalistica*, thus fits the universally accepted definition of Kabbalah as it is

[88] Idel (2011), 227.

concerned with the ten *sefirot*. However, if one includes *shemot* (divine names) as part of Kabbalah, the implications change. For example, whether or not Reuchlin's first magico-theological text, *De Verbo Mirifico*, is "Kabbalistic" or not depends on one's definition of "Kabbalah."

On a certain level, this observation is no more than axiomatic (i.e. Whether a token is included in a type will depend upon how the type is described). However, in the case of Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* and the comparison we will make in the following between it and the *Liber Razielis*, this observation is quite significant. The reason for this, put bluntly, it is the difference between, on the one hand, suggesting that Reuchlin had tried to Christianize two different varieties of one "type" (i.e. Kabbalah), and, on the other, suggesting that before trying to Christianize the Kabbalah, Reuchlin tried to Christianize *nigromantia* (i.e. "black" or "demonic" magic) – in other words, two different "types" of magic. Because of the association within Christian discourse of an "esoteric tradition concerning divine names" (Idel's description of the Kabbalistic tradition of *shemot*) with *nigromantia* ("demonic magic") going all the way back to the earliest Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* apologia, the implication is that if Reuchlin's use of divine names in *De Verbo Mirifico* is not "Kabbalistic," then it must represent medieval magic. In fact, both are true.

Idel's observation allows us to appreciate Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* as both Kabbalistic, and, to some extent, at least, nigromantic. If we return to the axiom, we see what is at stake in his text identification: if the description of a type determines the inclusion or exclusion of a token, then whoever describes the type therefore also

determines the inclusion or exclusion of a given token (or tokens). Within Christian theological discourse, then, the token of Solomonic demon compulsion (both Christian and Jewish) is excluded from religion as "type" and included in *nigromantia* because the theologians who contributed to those descriptions were institutionally empowered to "describe." With this in mind, we suggest that Reuchlin's first work of Christian Cabala, his *De Verbo Mirifico*, specifically chose its inspiration from a text that was known to medieval Christendom as a Solomonic grimoire, the *Liber Razielis*, since its status as *nigromantia* within Christian discourse does not preclude its status as "Kabbalah" within a Jewish discourse, which Reuchlin was attempting to syncretize. Moreover, for the purposes of the present discussion, it is ultimately of less concern whether modern scholarship should include "esoteric tradition concerning divine names" in its definitions of Kabbalah than it is of concern whether Pico and Reuchlin considered it part of the Kabbalah. Clearly, they did.

Returning now to our points of comparison, we may appreciate how the two texts line up. The *formula* in the *Liber virtutis* consists of litanies of divine names. There is no indication of their having been derived through *gematria*. As with Reuchlin's Pentagrammaton, they are simply transformations. In both texts, the names are "revealed," not derived. The Shem ha-Mephorash, we are told, was revealed to Adam in Paradise and Reuchlin's Pentagrammaton was revealed as the coming of Jesus. In the case of both the *Liber Razielis* and *De Verbo Mirifico*, the text provides the reader with divine names (i.e. "magic words") to use, and not with a means for deriving them as is the case with *gematria*. Reuchlin's use of the *condition of the performer* we have already

noted: his theory of efficacy requires conversion – belief – of the person who wishes to work miracles by the Pentagrammaton.[89] By comparison, the full version of the *Liber Razielis* devotes its entire fifth book, *Liber mundicie et abstentie* (*Book of cleanliness and abstinence*) to "purity." Its frame narrative reports:

> And Solomon said about Semiforas, "These are necessary with meekness, fasting, with orison [prayer], belief, clarity, purity, patience, meekness and constancy of a man, without which you might work nothing. And with [these qualities] you shall get whatever you wish."[90]

Even the abridged version of the *Liber Virtutis* specifies, "And these are letters piteously, devoutly, and meekly named [so] that petitions for all things [may be] fulfilled."[91] Both in its long and short forms, the *Liber Razielis* (*Liber Virtutis*) also require "belief."

Finally, we return to the *rite*. As it is described in the *Liber Virtutis*, it involves speaking to God, angels, demons, animals, plants, elements, etc. in such a way that one can be heard by those invoked. Simplistic though it is, this model could serve Reuchlin in an argument against the prevalent model of Aquinas' demonology since according to such a model, while demon compulsion is possible, it is not necessary. If the name(s) of God can move angels, men, beasts, and elements directly, demonic intercession is unnecessary. Yet Reuchlin goes a step further in having Capnion claim that man does *not* in fact perform miracles. "This of course, as his Jewish interlocutor is later to point out, is to misunderstand Capnion and wholly ignore the possibility of agents and the use of

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[89] Zika (2003) comments, "Capnion continues the preparation for the revelation of the wonderworking word with a kind of purgative rite. The three disputants are to offer themselves to the divine light, and with closed senses, allow the rain of supercelestial waters to descend on their heads – meanwhile praising and adoring with quiet minds the 'sea of goodness,' from which the flood of the most divine river of all wonders, of all marvelous names and sacred words, derives and emanates" (39).

[90] Karr 216.

[91] Karr 222.

metaphor in speech. We may say that men do miracles by the spirit of God, but what we actually mean is that God himself does them through men."[92] With that explanation, not only does Reuchlin evade the Scholastic demonological trap of demonic pacts in his theory of causality, he also continues to offer an implicit apologia for texts of Jewish magic by putting the clarification in the mouth of Baruchias: the texts have been 'misunderstood' by the Scholastic theologians and can indeed be recovered for the contemporaneous audience.

Such similarities between Reuchlin's earliest magico-theological work with particular parts of the medieval book of *nigromantia* known as the *Liber Razielis*, finally, suggests how the previous chapter's discussion of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons connects to the discussion in the following chapter, which connects the *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) of Martin Luther to the same discourse. We have demonstrated that, whether or not Reuchlin's earliest magico-theological work of Christian Cabala was directly influenced by all or part of the *Liber Razielis*, the hypothesis of how Reuchlin's work relates to the Solomonic tradition is plausible and the comparison is fruitful, demonstrating the continued engagement with the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons both directly, with *unio magica* allusive references to the figure of Solomon, and indirectly, through the continued influence of Aquinas' anti-magic demonology, which he constructed through instrumentalization of the paradigmatic *condition of the performer*.

[92] Zika (2003), 41.

The magical apologiae of Ficino and Pico had attempted to legitimize magic by providing for a *condition of the performer* that was achievable outside of the institutional Church. In *De Verbo Mirifico,* however, Reuchlin provides a theory of "magical" causality entirely dependent upon God and contingent upon a *condition of the performer* – conversion to Christianity –, which in 1494 before the Reformation, was within the control of the institutional Church.

Conclusion

The connections of history and theology sketched here are critical to tying in Renaissance thought to the theology of Aquinas, and thus to the dominant Church beliefs. During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, before Luther composed his *Small Catechism* (1529) and *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543), to which we turn in the following chapter, multiple humanist-magicians, and humanist magician-theologians had been decades at work reframing theories of "magic" in ways that would sidestep Aquinas' prohibitions of magic as explicit or implicit demonic pact and, with them, the dangerous charge of heresy after the promulgation of the "Witch Bull" in 1484.

Those humanist theologians making experiments most relevant to this study, Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), and Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522), all produced influential philosophico-religious and philosophico-magical humanist works on the eve of the Reformation. Each of these humanists – two Italians and a German – offers an alternative theory of magical efficacy (efficacious ritual) in his writings, and all of them were also framing their responses as reactions to

the apocryphal Solomon narrative, or at least significant parts of it. Evidence suggesting that none of them escaped it entirely can be found in the ways which each of them attempted to reframe the narrative.

Given their relationship to the apocryphal Solomon narrative and the *Shem ha-Mephorash*, it follows that Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* was also directed at the philosophico-religious and philosophico-magical humanist works of Ficino, Pico, and Reuchlin, as we will demonstrate in the next chapter of the present study. These connections support some of the more recent innovations in Renaissance studies, such as the arguments of Erika Rummel in *The Confessionalization of Humanism* (2000) and others who have challenged older assumptions regarding Reuchlin's status as "proto-Reformer" and the relationship of the Reformation to humanism in general.[93]

My account adds texture to theirs, but also goes further in tying the humanists and the Reformation into the Church's hegemonic theologies. From the perspective pursued in the present study, these humanists, and others like them (far more than Luther, as we shall see), obscured the figure of Solomon in their respective reframings of magic and so (to greater or lesser degrees) began to shift theories of magic away from models of overt demon compulsion. In this, they moved in the direction already delineated as licit by Aquinas, but also simultaneously amplified what demon compulsion (licit *or* illicit) meant, clearly implicating in it what was coming to be known as natural theology. And

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[93] See: Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), especially 29, where she writes, "The idea that humanists were either forerunners of or comrades-in-arms with the Reformation was kept alive in both Protestant and Catholic historiography until the middle of the century. In this manner humanism became an issue in the Reformation debate and its champions implicated in questions that were peripheral to the primary mission of the movement, which was cultural.

they did so in full awareness that they were close to crossing lines within the theological tradition based on Aquinas – at least that they were drawing a broader picture than he had.

We thus have come full circle and returned here to the attack on the apocryphal Solomon narrative, which we mentioned earlier. During the late medieval and early modern period, most scholars agree, the relationship of the apocryphal Solomon narrative to new theories of ritual magic (Ficino, Pico, Reuchlin, et al.) and anti-magic theology changed noticeably. The work accomplished in this chapter suggests, however, that these changes are best understood by approaching them not as a single cause and effect, but rather as a chain of causes and effects that reveal several layers of implication for this documented shift.

To begin, the figure of Solomon did not recede from the narrative as a direct result of Aquinas' definition and prohibition of magic as explicit or implicit demonic pact.[94] In fact, judging from the subsequent proliferation of Solomonic pseudoepigrapha traced at the beginning of this chapter, Aquinas seems to have inadvertently promoted interest in Solomonic magic by acknowledging it. However, the later elevation of witchcraft to the capital crime of heresy in the "Witch Bull" depended upon Aquinas' theory of magic as the effects of explicit or implicit demonic pacts. Nevertheless, even the potentially deadly consequences of being discovered with a text of Solomonic ritual magic cannot be credited with the shift away from overt references to Solomon in

[94] The logic of the Solomonic paradigm is that man can compel a demon without a pact. Aquinas argues that that is a deception and that in such cases the pact is nevertheless present, but implicit.

sixteenth-century texts, for numerous manuscripts survived the sixteenth century and still others were composed in the seventeenth.

Interestingly enough, it would appear to be both of these conditions (Aquinas' addition of the "implicit pact" and the elevation of witchcraft to the crime of heresy) combined with the advent of publishing and an early turn in the development of intellectual property that pushed published theories of magic away from the apocryphal narrative of Solomon.[95] To be sure, each of these humanists would have been free to read and write magical texts after the Solomonic model (admittedly at their own peril), but not to *publish* them, let alone to do so under their own names. The desire for recognition as author at the advent of book publishing in a context that included *both* the censorship of publications for heresy *and* the possibility of severe consequences (i.e. either punishment for the crime of heresy or the humiliation of a forced retraction/recantation of one's intellectual property) appears to have created a newly augmented perfect storm aimed at suppressing the visible traces of the figure of Solomon and demon compulsion from published late medieval and early modern models of "magic."

The attack on the figure of Solomon in the apocryphal narrative materials associated with the problem of magic as demon compulsion thus came in the forms of both external persecution in anti-magic theology written by orthodox theologians and internal adaptation to theories of magic by published magician-theologians. In the Northern Renaissance especially, the cumulative effect of these competing forces in this new phase in the debate codified by Aquinas resulted in a shift in emphasis from the

[95] Evidence in support of this theory may be found in the continuous interest in the apocryphal Solomon narrative in anonymous or pseudepigraphic magical manuscripts, which were obviously never intended for publication.

figure of the wise Solomon to the content of his wisdom: the ineffable and efficacious name of God. The idea of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*, which is demonstrably connected with the Solomon narrative as far back as the *Greek Magical Papyri*,[96] now provided a renewed focal point for the same apocryphal narrative of demon compulsion they had inherited, but a focal point which allowed for the inclusion of the figure of Solomon by implication rather than by name, thus side-stepping the existing prohibitions against books attributed to Solomon in the theological writings already mentioned.[97]

The history of a new era of study of classical texts also clearly plays a role. The effects of humanist scholarship no doubt also influenced the approaches of Renaissance humanist theologian-magicians to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons. Advances in textual scholarship ushered in with Renaissance humanism would thus also have been at least partly responsible for the decline in interest in medieval Latin texts of Solomonic ritual such as those discussed in the previous chapter. Today, we know that the very scholars who were most interested in these texts of magical pseudoepigrapha were also the most capable of determining them to be fakes, forgeries, or tendentious revisions. The humanist drive to return *ad fontes* (to the sources) would have driven scholars behind such Latin pseudepigrapha.

However, as we pointed out in the introduction to this project, the Latin tradition of the apocryphal narrative is not the only one to preserve narratives about Solomonic magic. Two texts in particular came into the Latin tradition from elsewhere, both of them

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[96] Refer to our discussion in Chapter 1.

[97] We refer to the explicit prohibitions of particular "Solomonic" texts as with William of Auvergne (already discussed) and to prohibitions like that of the *Index librorum prohibitorum* (also already discussed).

during the thirteenth century in the Castilian court of Alfonso X "the Wise" (1221-1284). These were the Arabic *Picatrix* and the Hebrew *Sepher Raziel*. Both of these texts refer to Solomon's power over demons. While the *Picatrix*, which is a compilation, is not attributed to Solomon's authorship in its entirety, the *Sepher Raziel* is. These texts, as we have argued, came to the fore again as part of the Hebrew corpus that had caught the humanists' attention.

With this analysis, we also set the stage for the final stage of the present project: the contextualization of Luther's work on Kabbalah and magic within the tradition of Solomonic demon compulsion and the theological debates associated with it. As we shall see, the absence of any reference to the figure of Solomon in Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* should thus be understood as an "evolutionary response": evolutions in the prey (i.e. the "magician") necessitate evolutions in the predator (i.e. the theologian). Because these humanist magicians had shifted their *published* theories of "magic" away from reliance on the figure of Solomon, Luther's anti-magic response could not attack them there, and so he had to reply to them on the ground they already had staked out, while furthering his own project in texts that today baffle some scholars, but which open out as interesting cultural-theological documents in this reading context.

As we shall see, Luther's theological ambitions made his responses difficult. Luther's anti-magic strategy seeks to undermine the narrative at the level of belief in the possibility of human agency within the causal chain addressed by these earlier theologians and humanists – and significantly, *not* at the level of belief in supernatural agency, for Luther does not dismiss the agency of the devil and his evil angels. In

consequence, Luther creates an argument that becomes applicable both inside and beyond an explicitly Solomonic paradigm.

Nevertheless, absence of the overt reference to the apocryphal Solomonic narrative in humanist writings need not be understood as an abandonment of the paradigm. As we have seen, moreover, especially in the writings of Reuchlin, much of the apocryphal narrative often remained palpable, a source of narratives for authorization about knowledge well into the early modern period. The Solomonic narrative materials were no medieval relict forms, but active parts of ongoing theological debates.

CHAPTER 4

PURITY AS THE PRESENCE-OF-FAITH:

LUTHER'S DOCTRINE OF *SOLA FIDE* AND THE PROTESTANT TURN

The present chapter extends the discussion of "purity" as the requisite *condition of the performer* within the Christian discourses of demon compulsion from the previous ones by examining fundamental differences between the changes in theological assumptions and constructs of what we have identified as "purity" between the new Protestant theology of Martin Luther on the one hand, and those of the medieval Scholastic theology that preceded them, on the other. In Luther's theology Christian ideas of demon compulsion do again arise, focusing specifically on what Malinowski isolates as the *condition of the performer* in his tripartite analysis of "magic." As we shall see,

what is at stake in this comparison between Luther's anti-magic theological argument and his predecessors is a demonstrable continuity of the influence of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons not only *within* Catholic Scholastic theology, but also *from* medieval Catholic magic/anti-magic discourse *into* the emergent discourse of Lutheran (and, by extension, post-Lutheran Protestant) theology. That is, the paradigm of conditional investiture with divine authority supported by the apocryphal Solomon narrative is the meridian along which this longitudinal study runs, and as such, part of the work of the present chapter remains devoted to demonstrating its continuity in Luther's anti-magic theology. That continuity grounds the main argument of the project as a whole – the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" within Christian magic/anti-magic discourse and the implications of that process.

I believe, first, that if such continuity can be demonstrated, then multiple related conclusions and observations are facilitated by an identifiably Lutheran construct of "faith" as requisite *condition of the performer* in discourses of both licit demon compulsion and illicit demon compulsion, i.e. "magic." The possibility of identifying texts of early modern ritual magic as being influenced by Protestant theology, as I already mentioned in the introduction of this project, is one of them.

Yet perhaps more significant – and more broadly applicable – in taking up Luther's anti-magic polemics in light of precursor texts is the possibility of identifying "faith" as a further development in the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" (i.e. faith-as-purity) with the movement of Christian sects further away from the Christian "Temple" (i.e. Jesus incarnate) in time and space. I stake this claim as a proposed

analogue to what Mary Douglas has posited concerning Jewish sects in relation to the Temple in Jerusalem: the fundamental discussions remain in place as religions change and adapt, but they need to be updated to remain relevant to new states of affairs (here: Luther's doctrine of *sola fide* and related theology).

The previous chapter showed how the apocryphal Solomon narrative continued to be influential (even where it appears to be absent); it did so by tracing how the authors of *published* sixteenth century magico-theological texts generally avoided direct reference to the figure of Solomon and focused instead on what Malinowski isolates as the *formula*, in this case, the ineffable Hebrew name of God. Even in such cases, I argued, the Solomon narrative had nonetheless to remain implicit because, by that time, the *formula* (i.e. certain Hebrew names of God) had come to be so ubiquitously associated with the apocryphal accounts of Solomon's demon compulsion within the Christian discourse that explicit mention of Solomon was no longer necessary – the kind of allusive connection necessary for what Dorothea Salzer has theorized as *unio magica* had become a commonplace.[1]

Thus if the previous chapter started as a seeming digression, it nonetheless demonstrates that the "magical" practices that confronted Martin Luther – particularly those originating in the Northern Renaissance – represented more of a continuation of medieval (Solomonic) demon compulsion than has been appreciated by previous scholars, who generally see a break in the theology and philosophy of magic between the

[1] Again, as Trachtenberg observes, the association was so strong that Solomon had become the prototypical magician and the "type" of magician (i.e. "Solomonic" magic). See Trachtenberg 63.

medieval period and the revival of Hermeticism in the Renaissance.[2] That "digression," as we have seen, was not one: it grounds the present chapter in extending the longitudinal model proposed in this project as a whole, moving out from my demonstration that the apocryphal Solomon narrative continued to occupy a central role in the construction of "purity" in magic/anti-magic discourses in Lutheran theology even as the specific details of the Solomon narrative itself begin to recede from both the theological and magical sides of the published discourse (though not necessarily in the magical manuscript tradition).

In this chapter, then, I suggest that the next development in that process of the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" is Luther's theological construct of "faith" (like "grace," an abstract theological construct). His construct of "faith" depends upon a different understanding of "grace" than that of Aquinas and the Scholastics (integral to the previous instantiation of "purity" as the presence-of-grace). In consequence, the present chapter makes a brief but necessary digression into a comparison between Aquinas' and Luther's respective constructs of "grace." This

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[2] For more discussion of this divide, see: Frank Klaassen, *The Transformations of Magic: Illicit Learned Magic in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance*. University Park, Penn: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013. Klaassen writes, "Until relatively recently, the historiography of illicit learned magic has fallen roughly into two streams [...]. In one, historians concentrated on the relationship between science and magic, and in the other on the relationship between religion and magic. Lynn Thorndike's eight-volume *History of Magic and Experimental Science* epitomizes the first approach. [...] Frances Yates significantly extended this approach to the Renaissance, emphasizing the connections with Renaissance magic, which she understood as fundamentally concerned with magic. In the other stream, which emphasizes the relationship between religion and magic, such scholars as Keith Thomas, Norman Cohn, and Edward Peters have examined the relationship of magic to broader cultural issues, and have worked to locate magic in the complex nexus of moral, legal, and religious thought. Thomas's classic *Religion and the Decline of Magic* assumed as its starting point that religion and magic were inextricably interwoven in the medieval period. Norman Cohn sought to understand the part that ritual magic played in late medieval conceptions of witchcraft and evil. Scholars have also tended tacitly to assume a division between magic before and after the 1480s, when Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola produced their powerful new syntheses. Some, like Frances Yates have explicitly contrasted medieval and Renaissance magic; but for the most part this has been an unspoken divide that few scholars have crossed" (6).

represents in some ways an ancillary argument but it allows me to suggest that the performance of acts of faith for the purpose of proving or increasing faith-as-purity[3] may be understood as an efficacious ritual act analogous to the performance of ritual ablutions for the attainment of ritual purity (such as in ancient Judaism) and to ritual participation in the sacraments for the accumulation of sanctifying grace-as-purity (such as in Scholastic Catholicism).

The previous chapter unmasked the apocryphal Solomon narrative in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century magic/anti-magic discourse in which, we have argued, its inclusion becomes implicit rather than explicit – covert rather than overt. That discourse focused on the ineffable name of God (e.g. Tetragrammaton or the *Shem ha-Mephorash*) rather than the figure of Solomon in the early stages of print technology and print censorship, but which belongs to the same Christian discourse of demon compulsion, as we have shown. Now, we pick up our investigation of the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" (as *condition of the performer*) where we left it off at the end of chapter 2, moving from the Scholastic-Thoman construct of "purity" as presence-of-grace (presented in chapter 2) to the sixteenth century Lutheran turn to purity as the presence-of-faith.

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[3] Our formulation here of "proving or increasing faith" is not merely speculative or theoretical. In his *Vom Schemhamphoras*, Luther himself discusses "faith" in these terms. The following is from Gerhard Falk's translation of the work - the first English translation of that work - which appears in his 1992 *The Jew in Christian Theology*: "For as I plainly stipulated in [*On the Jews and Their Lies*], it is not my opinion that I can write against the Jews in the hope of converting them. That is why I did not call that pamphlet *Against the Jews*, but *Against the Jews and Their Lies*, so that we Germans may know from historical evidence what a Jew is so that we can warn our Christians against them as we warn against the Devil himself *in order to strengthen and honor our belief* [emphasis added]; not to convert the Jews which is about as possible as converting the Devil." See: Gerhard Falk, *The Jew in Christian Theology: Martin Luther's "Vom Schem Hamphoras", Previously Unpublished in English, and Other Milestones in Church Doctrine Concerning Judaism* (McFarland & Co., U.S, 1992) 166.

Yet the Christian theological anti-magic discourse becomes polyphonic with the rise of Reformation theology (i.e. that it develops distinct, contemporaneous Catholic and Lutheran anti-magic argumentation strategies). Because of this, it is also necessary to demonstrate the influence of the apocryphal Solomon narrative on Luther's theological ideas specifically since the trope of Solomon's demon compulsion also appears absent from Luther's writings.[4] In consequence, we must also show that Luther is somehow responding to or operating within the apocryphal Solomon narrative in his anti-magic theology. To accomplish this, we will first and foremost need to demonstrate Luther's use of the unique narrative paradigm that we have been pursing: the conditional investiture of the human agent with divine authority in exchange/as reward for achieving and maintaining "purity." We will uncover evidence of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in Luther's implication and allusion in a discussion of the efficacious power of the name of God (i.e. *Shem ha-Mephorash* or Tetragrammaton) – that ineffable name familiar from both late antique references to the "Seal of Solomon" and medieval magic/anti-magic discourses of demon compulsion associated with Solomon.

This strategy also allows us to adduce evidence that Luther recognized the efforts of the authors of Renaissance magico-theological texts (e.g. Ficino, Pico, and Reuchlin), who, as we argued in the previous chapter, were instrumental in obscuring the Solomonic narrative paradigm in response to theological censorship. Ultimately, the evidence that we will present suggests that, in his *Vom Schemhamphoras*, Luther shaped his anti-magic theology according to these constraints. He constructed his theological argument against

[4] Its influence on Catholic discourse is easily demonstrated, as we have shown, and thus not in question.

the magical invocation of the name(s) of God by extending to all of Jewry the narrative of Solomon's loss of divine favor, which Aquinas had instrumentalized in his anti-magic theology. In short, as we shall see, Luther argues that Christians who invoke the *Shem ha-Mephorash* are not Christians at all, but rather Jews, and that Jews are idolaters in service of the devil. Thus, Christians who "magically" invoke the *Shem ha-Mephorash* are worshipping the devil. In equating the Christian "magical" invocation of the name(s) of God with the practice of Judaism, which he defines as idolatry, we shall see, Luther uses a version of the same anti-magic argument that Aquinas had crafted by combining aspects of the apocryphal Solomon narrative and Solomon's paradigmatic sin of idolatry from 1 Kings 11.

The final thrust of the chapter will offer our readings of Luther's two separate attempts at an anti-magic theology: first in his *Small Catechism* (1529), and then in *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543). This reading accomplishes primarily two things. First, it lays out Luther's construction of "faith-as-purity" in the process of spiritualization and metaphoricization within the context of demon compulsion that has existed within Christian discourse since late antiquity. Second, it presents the "performance of faith" as an efficacious ritual act, analogous to the performance of Levitical ablutions and performative participation in Catholic sacraments as means of attaining the requisite *condition of the performer*. To make this case in another way, the project's conclusion will return explicitly to the compulsion of demons, now in forms that construct "faith-as-purity," as is accomplished in two early modern texts of ritual magic, the *Arbatel* and the *Book of Abramelin*.

"Magic" as Luther Knew it: Anti-Magic Theology in the *Small Catechism* and Licit Demon Compulsion

As we have seen, as early as Origen (185-254) and as late as William of Auvergne (1180/90-1249) the name(s) of God were believed to have a certain power to compel demons even when invoked by non-Christians.[5] Likewise, we have already pointed to fifteenth century examples from the ample record of the Christian awareness of the Jewish tradition of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* (both from Kabbalistic and pre-Kabbalistic sources). Such examples include Johannes Hartlieb's reference to a manual of illicit magic by the name of *Schemhamphoras* in his *Buch Aller Verbotenen Kunst* (1456), Pico della Mirandola's discussion of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* in his *900 Theses* (1486), and Trithemius of Spanheim's inclusion of it in his *Antipalus Maleficiorum* (1508).

Perhaps most significantly for the purposes of the present project, we have also considered at length Johannes Reuchlin's book-length meditation on the idea of the ineffable name of God in his *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494). Moreover, to these we might also add Roger Bacon's discussion of a book titled *Liber semamphoras*, in which he complains of the linguistic corruption that occurs in translating Hebrew to Latin,[6] and Scholastic theologian Nicholas of Cusa's (1401-1464) treatment of the subject of the

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[5] As we have demonstrated in our analysis of his demonology, William of Auvergne was indeed preoccupied with the significance of "purity" in relation of "magical" ritual (such as demon compulsion). Presumably, some association between physical forms of "purity" as *condition of the performer* and the efficacy of the ritual act also existed in Christian antiquity. A number of studies that treat the subject of purity in ancient Christianity have been published in recent years, but to the best of my knowledge, there has not yet been any scholarship that has sought to connect Origen's particular non-canonical views on demon compulsion with these early Christian purity practices.

[6] Julien Véronèse, "Magic, Theurgy, and Spirituality in the Medieval Ritual of the Ars Notoria," Trans. Claire Fanger, *Invoking Angels: Theurgic Ideas and Practices, Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (University Park: Penn State Univ, 2015) 37-78, here 60f.

Shem ha-Mephorash, albeit referring to it by the Greek "Tetragrammaton," in his theological writings.[7]

Such examples provide abundant evidence that, for more than a hundred years before Luther's *Small Catechism* (1529) and *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543), the efficacious power of the ineffable Hebrew name of God (whether referred to by the Hebrew "*Shem ha-Mephorash*" or the Greek "Tetragrammaton") had been widely pondered, theologized, and homilized by Christian theologians independent of the polemics and counter-polemics of the *Toledot Yeshu* discussed in the previous chapter.

In a similar vein, we may assume that Christian magicians practiced the invocation of the name(s) of God, based on the textual evidence of surviving manuals of ritual magic. At the same time, the connection of the ineffable Hebrew name of God to the apocryphal Solomon narrative was also well known. The rhetoric of the anti-magic theology of William of Auvergne and Thomas Aquinas, like that of their predecessors at the University of Paris, demonstrates as much. Yet with the rise of print technology and the publication of texts of Renaissance magic – theologically censored, non-anonymous printed discourse –, overt reference to the figure of Solomon as well as the compulsion of demons became altogether scarce in comparison to references in medieval Christian magic/anti-magic discourse.

Scholastic theology, as we have shown, had increasingly come to associate all magic with Solomon. Demonstration of a causal relationship between print publication

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[7] For a survey of Cusa's engagement with the idea of the Tetragrammaton, including a list of his works which this interest is reflected, see: Robert J. Wilkinson, *Tetragrammaton: Western Christians and the Hebrew Name of God: from the Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015) 277-79.

and theological censorship on the one hand and the near absence of the Solomon narrative in *printed* sixteenth century texts about magic on the other is beyond the scope of this project. However, based on the difficulties which Ficino, Pico, Reuchlin, and Agrippa all had with theological censorship and accusations of heresy, one may hazard the assumption that overt references to Solomon's alleged authority over demons represented an unnecessary risk, given the vigorous theological condemnation of that narrative beginning with William of Auvergne (ca. 1180/90 – 1249).

Whether or not Luther was familiar with all of the above sources, he would have known many of them through his own studies as a theologian. As Trachtenberg and others have written (See: Trachtenberg, 1943), and as we have endeavored to demonstrate, there was no escaping the association of the ineffable name(s) of God with illicit magic and demon compulsion in the medieval and early modern periods in the Christian magic/anti-magic discourse. Moreover, Luther was an early advocate of the works of both Pico della Mirandola and Reuchlin,[8] each of whom wrote about the efficacious power of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* in their magico-theological works, as we have shown. Given the ubiquity of the pre-existing discourse, what the Renaissance authors like Reuchlin and his predecessors were engaged in with their theories of magic

[8] Erika Rummel notes: "In [Luther's] *Resolutions of the Disputations Concerning the Efficacy of Indulgences (1518)* he complained that the inquisitors were so zealous that they made heretics of the most pious Christians. 'For what else do the cases of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Lorenzo Valla, Petrus Ravenna, Johannes Vesalius, and most recently, Johann Reuchlin and Jacques Lefèvre show? Contrary to their own intentions, their well-meaning words were turned into evil.'" See: Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 17.

should thus be understood as more of a rehabilitation of the "magical" use of the name(s) of God than innovation.[9]

Luther would also have known the discourse of divine names (both theological-exegetical and magical/anti-magical) from his studies as a theologian and recognized the magico-theological attempts at its rehabilitation as efforts to legitimize magical practices. Certainly, by the time he wrote his *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543), he had become aware of the account of the significance of the *shem* (*Shem ha-Mephorash*) in the *Toledot Yeshu* through the 1520 publication of *Victoria Poercheti adversos impios Hebraeos* (c. 1303) of the Genoese Carthusian monk Porchetus (died c. 1315). In Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*, he translates from Latin to German Porchetus' version of the *Toledot Yeshu* which is itself copied from Raymund Martín's *Pugio Fidei* (c. 1280) discussed in chapter 2.

As a theologian, Luther was thus confronted with two theories of magic: medieval "demonic" and Renaissance "non-demonic" magic. His challenge was to develop an anti-magic theology that refuted and forbade both – something that Scholastic demonology was failing to do. As we have shown in the previous chapter, in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, magicians, theologians, and magician-theologians continued to modify their theories of magic to avoid or obscure reliance on the intercession of demons by making use of newly recovered and translated ancient authorities. There is no reason

[9] The recent and extensive volume on the life and works of Johannes Reuchlin by Franz Posset is the only one who has tried to argue that what Reuchlin was doing with his Christian Cabala was somehow completely distinct from the late medieval and early modern discourses on "magic." To the detriment of an otherwise impressive feat of scholarship, Posset simply ignores the wealth of research that has addressed this topic over the last several decades. For more on Posset's hypothesis of Reuchlin's "orthodox Catholic Cabala," see Franz Posset, *Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522): A Theological Biography* (Berlin: Gruyter, Walter de, & Co, 2015).

to suspect that these humanist magicians were not genuinely intrigued and inspired by the recovery of certain ancient and early medieval Greek texts through contemporaneous humanist translations,[10] but the simple rhetorical utility of recently recovered ancient pro-magic authorities not yet condemned by the theologians cannot be discounted – all sides had access to a new body of texts that were not *a priori* forbidden, and so could return to these debates about magic and the nature of causality. Drawing on such sources, then, some, like Marsilio Ficino, tried to recast "magic" as a natural force (i.e. natural magic or *magia naturalis*) and thus remove it from theological jurisdiction. Others, like Johannes Reuchlin, sought to legitimize such causality within the framework of Catholic theology.[11]

The next section will be concerned with the latter strategy, since both Luther's earlier anti-magic theological strategy in his *Small Catechism* (1529) and his later attempt in *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) address the magical use of the name of God and forbid such practices on theological (as opposed to natural) grounds. We will address the

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[10] Ficino's translation into Latin of the Greek *Corpus Hermeticum* provides an interesting example. On the one hand, as has been noted by George Sarton, it went through eight early printed editions appeared before 1500 and a further twenty-two by 1641. This indicates it was immensely popular. See Sarton's review of Walter Scott's *Hermetica*, *Isis* 8.2 (May 1926) 343-346, here p. 345. On the other, as Brian Copenhaver has argued, "the philosophical theory of magic presented in *De Vita III* depends much more on Proclus, and Plotinus and other Neoplatonic philosophers than on Ficino's famous discovery," the *Hermetica*, which have little to say about magic and whose philosophical content is banal, eclectic and incoherent. See: Brian P. Copenhaver, "Scholastic Philosophy and Renaissance Magic in the 'de Vita' of Marsilio Ficino" (*Renaissance Quarterly*. 37.4 (1984) 523. This indicates that its popularity is not necessarily evident in the theories of magic that arose in conjunction with its discovery. This leads us to consider its rhetorical value as an authority in the face of theological censorship.

[11] Posset, as we have noted, holds a different opinion. He sees an initial distancing from "magic" in Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*: "Reuchlin shunned the realm of magic and the company of dubious magicians precisely because he wanted to be a good Catholic," in Franz Posset, *Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522): A Theological Biography* (Berlin: Gruyter, Walter de, & Co, 2015) 125. For Posset, Reuchlin's initial movement away from "magic" in *De Verbo Mirifico* becomes absolute in *De Arte Cabalistica*. He writes, "Magic practice is dark and demonic as it employs names of ghosts and evil spirits. Here in his mature opus Reuchlin, therefore, avoids the word 'magic' altogether because in his view any miraculous power Cabalist no longer needs to rely on, but instead relies on the names of the angels. 'Magic' was banned from *The Art of the Cabala*. Reuchlin sorted out one specific book which is ascribed to 'Solomon' as he deliberately excluded the *Liber Razielis* as 'occult nonsense (652).'"

changes in Luther's anti-magic theology as reflected in *Vom Schemhamphoras* at the end of this chapter, but proceed here by outlining the conditions and implications of his initial attempt in his *Small Catechism*. These discussions help to position Luther with respect to the theological debates of his era, as they illuminate his own intellectual agenda and strategies in dealing with contemporaneous theological debates.

Luther's Initial Prohibition of the "Magical" Invocation of the Name of God as a Sin of Blasphemy in the *Small Catechism* of 1529

Luther's first iteration of an anti-magic theology can be found in his *Small Catechism* (*Der Kleine Katechismus*), published in 1529 for the religious instruction of children. Its format is simple, consisting of reviews and short explanations of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, the Office of the Keys and Confession and the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The attention that Luther devotes to "magic" in the *Small Catechism* seems to be no more than passing, yet it was reflective of the practice of "magic" as Luther would have known it – the invocation of divine names – and addresses and forbids the practice as such. For this reason, it seems, he includes the practice of magic in a gloss to the Second Commandment, which he renders as: "You shall not use the name of the Lord, your God, in vain; for the Lord will not leave unpunished him who abuses His name."[12] Unlike with the familiar English rendering, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, they God, in vain," Luther's translation seems to acknowledge the possibility of the efficacious power

[12] Luther's German is as follows: "Du sollst den Namen des Herrn, deines Gottes, nicht unnützlich führen; denn der Herr wird den nicht ungestraft lassen, der seinen Namen mißbraucht."

of the name of God. Also, unlike the familiar English, Luther's translation suggests severe consequences for disobeying the Commandment.

The explanatory gloss with which he follows the translation is simple and catechetical. As he does after each of the Ten Commandments, Luther begins with the question "What does that mean?"[13] It is in his brief answer that we find the first iteration of his anti-magical theology. He writes, "We should fear and love God, that by His name we do not curse, swear, *work magic*, lie, or deceive, but rather call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks to it."[14]

What is most significant for the purposes of the present study is that Luther frames his prohibition against "magic" as a sin against the Second Commandment – as sin against the *name* of God. For Luther, then, magic is a sin of blasphemy. As we have discussed in the previous chapter, in contrast, Aquinas' persistent theory of magic, which he elaborates in *De Potentia*, forbids magic as idolatry – a sin against the First Commandment. The whole of Scholastic demonology depended upon this framing. We may contrast this with Luther's translation and discussion of the First Commandment in his *Small Catechism*:

> I am the Lord, your God. You shall have no other gods besides me. You shall make for yourself no image or representation, neither of that which is in heaven

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[13] "Was ist das?"

[14] "Du sollst den Namen des Herrn, deines Gottes, nicht unnützlich führen; denn der Herr wird den nicht ungestraft lassen, der seinen Namen mißbraucht.
Was ist das?
Wir sollen Gott fürchten und lieben, daß wir bei seinem Namen nicht fluchen, schwören, zaubern, lügen oder trügen, sondern denselben in allen Nöten anrufen, beten, loben und danken."

above, nor upon the earth below, nor of that in the water below the earth. Neither worship them nor serve them.[15]

What does that mean?

We should fear, love, and trust God above all things.[16]

Significantly in light of Aquinas' demonology, Luther's gloss to the First Commandment makes no reference to magic.

Luther's choice to break with the well-established tradition of Scholastic demonology can only be read as intentional; it effectively meant starting over from scratch. The apparent advantage of this approach is that it allowed him to prohibit both medieval *nigromantia* and Renaissance Christian Cabala with a single, simple gloss. While Renaissance Christian Cabala (including Reuchlin's two Cabalistic works, *De Verbo Mirifico* and *De Arte Cabalistica*) attempted to eliminate or obscure dependence on demonic intervention (thus making the debate over compulsion vs. pact obsolete), it shared a reliance on the *Shem ha-Mephorash* or Tetragrammaton with medieval magic. In Malinowskian terms, then, Luther was able to attack both theories of magic at their common point: the *formula*.

Of course there were still outliers – theories of magic that were seemingly unaffected by Luther's prohibition. However, many of the texts recovered and translated during the Renaissance that contributed to the proliferation of "magic," like the famous *Corpus Hermeticum* translated by Marsilio Ficino in 1486, did not receive or require the

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[15] "Ich bin der Herr, dein Gott. Du sollst nicht andere Götter haben neben mir. Du sollst dir kein Bildnis noch irgend ein Gleichnis machen, weder des, das oben im Himmel, noch des, das unten auf Erden, oder des, das im Wasser unter der Erde ist. Bete sie nicht an und diene ihnen nicht."

[16] "Was ist das? Wir sollen Gott über alle Dinge fürchten, lieben und vertrauen."

individual attention of Luther's anti-magic theology. The reason for this is that Renaissance magician-theologians who appealed to such Greek pagan sources were attempting to use them to interpret scripture in the way that Aquinas had used Aristotle. This was, in turn, the very interpretation of scripture in the theology of Aquinas to which Luther so strongly objected, and early on, he had made his position on the relationship of philosophy to theology abundantly clear. In his *Disputation against Scholastic Theology* (These 43-44 and 50), he writes: "It is an error to say that no man can become a theologian unless he becomes one with Aristotle. Briefly, the whole of Aristotle is to theology as darkness is to light. This in opposition to the scholastics."[17] For Luther, scripture did not require external illumination, let alone from pagans. Thus, as pagan philosophers, Aristotle and Hermes were two parts of the same problem and equally objectionable to Luther, no matter if used by Aquinas or Ficino. In this respect, as we trace in more detail below, Luther's doctrine of *sola scriptura* also served as an anti-pagan magic theology[18]: with that single teaching, Luther closed off both Aristotelian (Scholastic) and Hermetic (magical) interpretations of scripture and exegesis. No doubt it is because of this we do not find separate condemnations of Renaissance Hermetic magic

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[17] See: Martin Luther, "Disputation against Scholastic Theology" (1517), in *LW*, xxxi, 9-16.

[18] In *The Popular Encyclopedia of Church History*, Edward E. Hindson and Dan Mitchell write the following concerning the source and content of the Protestant doctrine *sola scriptura*: "In *sola scriptura*, the Bible is the only and final source of authority for religious beliefs. Luther appealed to *sola scriptura* when he called upon to defend his views before the Diet of Worms" (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013) 312. Luther's (1521) statement is recorded as, "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by evident reason - for I can believe neither the pope nor councils alone, as it is clear that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves - I consider myself convicted by the testimony of Holy Scripture, which is my basis; my conscience is captive to the Word of God. Thus I cannot and will not recant, because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound. God help me. Amen" (Luther, cited in Heiko Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil* [New York: Image Books, 1982] 36).

in Luther's writings. In taking on Aquinas, Luther had his proxy to debate, and one of more contemporary value to his audience.

Luther's approach to magic as a sin of blasphemy also allowed him to address the popularization of Jewish Kabbalistic mystical and exegetical techniques among Christians. At the same time that humanist scholars began translating texts of Neo-Platonic Greek philosophy and magic, they were also translating texts of Jewish "magical" tradition of Kabbalah. Their efforts (led by Pico della Mirandola and Reuchlin) to introduce Jewish Kabbalah into Christianity resulted in what have come to call "Christian Cabala." While these and other Christian Cabalists sought – like the Hermeticists – to illuminate scripture and theology, the basic premise of their exegetical technique slipped past the firewall of Luther's doctrine of *sola scriptura* for the simple reason that the Christian Cabalists did not claim to add or reconcile one theology or philosophy with another (as both the Scholastics and the Hermeticists did), but rather claimed knowledge and understanding of the existence of hidden features of the Hebrew scripture – *scriptura* – itself, placed there by God, in the language of his original revelation. Thus, because Luther could not or would not dismiss the Hebrew bible, he was forced to confront the proliferation of Christian Cabalistic "magical" uses of the name(s) of God head-on in his theological anti-magic attempts to define a new orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

For this reason – because sixteenth century Christian Cabala (like medieval *nigromantia*) tended to focus on various aspects of the efficacious power of the ineffable name(s) of God – Luther's anti-magic theology appears to be exclusively couched in

terms of correcting and chastising his followers regarding magical invocations of the name(s) of God to the exclusion of separate objections to pagan (Hermetic) authorities. Because of this, we suspect, most of the relatively small number of scholars who have addressed Luther's anti-magic writings at all have mistaken them for criticisms of Jewish practice rather than attempts to enforce orthopraxy within Christianity.[19]

By undermining that part of "magic" which Malinowski isolates as *formula*, then, Luther, unlike the Scholastics, was able to address both medieval Solomonic *nigromantia* and Renaissance Christian Cabala with a single anti-magic theological argument. Yet it was a bold move. In it, he risked the appearance of limiting the power of God, whose name had so long been held to be efficacious.[20] Even Aquinas had only implied as much by not directly addressing the subject in *De potentia*.[21] Perhaps it is for this reason that in the first iteration of Luther's anti-magic theology – the *Small Catechism* (1529) – he forbade the magical invocation of the name of God without overtly denying its efficacy, thus taking on only part of the theology that we have been tracing here. Only near the end

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[19] For example, Hsia describes *Vom Schemhamphoras* as "a work that attacks the Kabbalah as mere superstition and word magic" in R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (Boulder: University Pr. of Colorado, 2004) 132.

[20] The power of the divine name of YHWH is illustrated in Isaiah 45:23-24: "I have sworn by myself, the word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. They will say of me, 'only in the Lord are righteousness and strength.' men will come to him, and all who were angry at him will be put to shame." the power of the divine name of the son is likewise argued in Philippians 2:9-11: "for this reason also, God highly exalted him, and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is lord, to the glory of god the father."

[21] Aquinas "*reply to the fifth objection*. Again, by coming when adjured by the invocation of the divine majesty, they wish men to think that they are not utterly banished by the justice of god. For they do not desire to be as gods, as altogether equal to god, but rejoice in receiving from men divine worship under him." Aquinas' Latin original reads: "Ad quintum dicendum, quod in hoc etiam quod ad invocationem divinae virtutis adveniunt, volunt intelligi quod non sint a divina iustitia omnino exclusi; non enim sic divinitatem appetunt ut summo Deo velint aequari omnino, sed sub eo, divinitatis cultum sibi ab hominibus exhiberi gaudent." See: *De* Potentia, Q 6, A 10, ad. 5.

of his life (1546) does he specifically deny any "magical" efficacy of the name of God in *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543), as we will discuss near the end of the chapter.

We note here an important difference in the respective circumstances of Aquinas and Luther's anti-magic theologies that helps us locate Luther's position within contemporaneous theology: the problem of Solomonic magic (medieval *nigromantia*) that confronted Aquinas belonged to the Scholastic discourse of which he himself was a part and which he sought to uphold. The same is not true of Luther, who was forced to address both the efficacious power of the name(s) of God and the compulsion of demons because of the prevalence of that narrative outside of the discourse that he was trying to establish. In his own theology, Luther did not allow for the real, physical intervention or compulsion of demons.[22] For Luther, the contested spaces that supported the discourses of both medieval *nigromantia* and Renaissance magic (including Christian Cabala) were exogenous problems: he was, for example, uninterested in the ambivalent relationship of

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[22] Luther's demonology presents something of an inconsistent hodge-podge. On the one hand, witches may present a real danger, and on the other Luther consistently grants the devil (and demons) no more than the power of illusion. Erika Rummel has made the backwards connection (in a blog article!) from the much clearer writings of Johann Weyer - a generation later - to Luther. Weyer explicitly denies that demons are able to directly physically affect the material world. Rummel observes: "A generation after Luther, the German physician Johann Weyer declared that witchcraft was an illusion, a 'trick played on the optical nerves.' So-called witchcraft could usually be explained by 'the stupidity of old age, the inconstancy and fickleness of females, a weak mind, despair, and mental illness.' [...] Weyer's book [*De praestigiis daemonum*, "*On the Tricks/Illusions of Demons*"] was so popular that it went through four editions (1563-68). "Like Luther," she continues, [Weyer] suspected that the devil was behind those illusions. People might be 'deceived by their imagination or by the wiles of the evil spirit.'" Rummel then quotes from Luther's Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians: "This sin was very common before the light of the Gospel appeared. When I was a child there were many witches and sorcerers around who 'bewitched' cattle, and people, particularly children, and did much harm. But now that the Gospel is here you do not hear so much about it because the Gospel drives out the devil *with all his illusions*. Now he bewitches people in a worse way with spiritual sorcery. Witchcraft is a brand of idolatry. As witches used to bewitch cattle and men, so idolaters, i.e., all the self-righteous, go around to bewitch God and to make Him out as one who justifies men not by grace through faith in Christ but by the works of men's own choosing. They bewitch and deceive themselves. If they continue in their wicked thoughts of God they will die in their idolatry." See: Rummel, Erika. "THERE ARE NO WITCHES IN GERMANY?" *FACTS Are Stranger than HISTORICAL FICTION*, 28 Nov. 2013, rummelsincrediblestories.blogspot.com/2013/11/thereare-no-witches-in-germany-check.html. Thus, it would seem, that according to Luther, witches and sorcerers can bewitch animals and children, but the Devil can create no more than illusions. This tension remains unresolved in Luther's theology, perhaps because allowing any physical power to the Devil (or demons) would risk validating the "work" of banishing them in the familiar Catholic ways.

Scholastic demonology to the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's demon compulsion. Moreover, the external nature of that discourse was another part of the reason that Luther was able to condemn both medieval *nigromantia* (Solomonic and otherwise) and early modern Christian Cabala with the same anti-magic theological argument.

Luther's magic/anti-magic theology was not demonological – it did not depend on explaining the nature of demonic intervention (e.g. explicit or implicit pact) to justify its prohibition of magic. The involvement of demons, which was the apparent difference between medieval and Renaissance theories of magic, was irrelevant to Luther's anti-magic theology. Where the Scholastics were tied up with the intricacies of their demonologies for much of the sixteenth century, debating the precise nature of the intermediary forces in the causal chain (e.g. angel, demon, impersonal planetary spirit, etc.) and the relationship of the magician or exorcist to that force (e.g. explicit or implicit pact, passive recipient of natural emanations, ecclesiastically authorized grace-imbued exorcist, etc.), Luther's strategy was to eliminate the *formula* and redefine the *condition of the performer*. We can see his strategy at work in his representation of licit (i.e. legitimate) demon compulsion in the quote from his *Tischreden*:

> 3840: Satan may be [conquered/vanquished] by contempt, *but in faith*, not in presumption. However, he is certainly not to be invited; for he is a powerful

enemy, seeing and hearing everything that lies before us and that we are now talking about. And God permitting, he spoils everything that is good.[23]

1557: When the devil comes during the night to plague me, I give him this answer: "Devil, I must sleep now; for this is God's command: Work during the day, sleep at night." If he does not stop to vex me but faces me with my sins, I reply: "Dear devil, I have heard the record. But I have committed far more sins which do not even stand in your record. Put them down too. . . . ." If he still does not stop accusing me as a sinner, I say to him in contempt: "Holy Satan, pray for me! You never have done anything evil and alone are holy. Go to God and acquire grace for yourself. If you want to make me righteous, I tell you: Physician heal yourself."[24]

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[23] Martin Luther, *Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische gesammtausgabe; Tischreden: 1531-46. 3. Band, Tischreden aus den Dreißiger Jahren* (Heimar: H. Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1914). 651-53, here #3840 (Dresd. I. 423, 214; laut. 1538, 64): "Illa vespera aderat magister simon, heluetiorum bernensis superattendens, et coenavit cum Luth[ero et familiariss[ime colloquebatur bonam spem de heluetiis indicans; nam bucerus ultra vires laboraret et maxime senesceret. Deinde de conzeno bernensi doctissimo, wie er wol zur einigkeit riethe, dicebatque de conzeno historiam, quod quandam mulierculam strepitu sathanae diu veatam admonuisset, ut illum contemneret et diceret: las mich zu frieden, und solst zu conzeno kommen! Quod cum fecisset illa mulier, ut sathan conzenum deberet visitare, illico illa hora abiit sathan et accessit conzenum et per integrum annum variis tumultibus eum vexavit. R[espondit luth[erus: sathan (dresd. I. 423, 215) contemnendo est vincendus, sed in fide, non praesumptione. Man sol in gleich wol nicht zu gast laden, den er ist ein starcker feindt, den er sicht und horet alles, was fur uns ist, was wir ietzund renden, et permissione dei omnia bona currumpit. Er wolte, das nicht ein gresleyn oder leublein wuchs. Das heist sathanae potentia. Sed tamen nostra corda conscientiam et fidem perspicere non potest. Habet aliquam similitudinem divinitatis, sed deus sibi praeservavit veram divinitatem. Der kan dem teuffel weren. Drumb spricht Christus: confidete, ego vici mundum, id est, totum diabolum. Ideo oramus: libera nos a malo. *Πονηρον* est multifarium, omnes calamitates, miseriae, peccata, scandala. Summa, es ist kein auffhoren. Contra hoc malum in dies (dresd. I. 423, 216) oramus et exaudimur, sicut videmus, quomodo impeditur, et nos credentes iudicamus angelos malos, 1. Cor. 6. Wiewol er imer wider einschleicht, den er wil sich nicht gern aus dem praescriptum laßen bringen. Es ist aber der teuffel eyn nerrischer geist, quia ipse dat occasionem christo, torquendo infirmos confirmat autoritatem christi et apostolorum sanantium languidos. Potius sathan deberet quiescere, sed illa extrema nocendi cupiditas pellit eum etiam ad sui confessionem. Deinde recitavit miracula magna apostolorum et cursum praedicationis ipsorum, excellentius quam personae christi: nam petrus una contione tria milia lucriecit, quod non legitur de christo. Ideo christus (dresd. I. 423, 217) dicit matth. 11: qui autem minor est in regno coelorum, maior est illo. Christus tamen infirmissimo suo regno magnificentissima. Miracula ostendit." the partial English translation is from: martin Luther and ewald m. Plass, W*hat Luther Says: An Anthology* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1972) 1: 402, quote #1187.

[24] Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesammtausgabe*; *Tischreden: 1531-46. 2. Band, Tischreden aus den Dreisiger Jahren* (Weimar: H. Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1913). 132, here #1557: "Wie man den teufel anweisen sol. Wen der teufl zu nacht an mich kompt, so gib ich im diese antwort: teufl, ich muß jetzt schlaffen, den das ist Gottes bevelch, des tags erbeitten, des nachts schlafen. Deinde quando non cessat me vexare obtrudens mihi peccata mea, resp[ondeo: Lieber Teufel, ich habs register gehert, aber ich hab noch mehr sund getan, die stehn nicht in deim register; schreibs auch an: Ich hab die hosen und bruch geschissen; hengs an hals undh wisch maul dran. Terio si non cessat inculpans me peccatorem, tunc dico per contemptum: Sancte Satane, ora pro me! Denn du hast nie ubel gehandelt et es solus sanctus; gehe hin zu Gott, erwurb dir selber gnade, et si me vis probum facere, tunc dico tibi: Medice, cura te ipsum! Der Teufel aber ist ein solcher boswicht, quod grandia mala et horribilia non offert mihi ut celebrationem missae, contemptum Dei etc. Auch behut mich Gott Darfur! Wen es einfiel cum potentia, illa magnitude peccati, was es vor ein grevel ist, ich must sterben." The English translation is taken from: Martin Luther, and Ewald M. Plass *What Luther Says: An Anthology* (Saint Louis, Mo: Concordia Publishing House, 1972) 1: 403f., quote #1191.

With the words "he is certainly not to be invited," Luther effectively addresses the conjuration and compulsion of medieval magic. His framing of the encounter suggests that he is describing an appropriate response to the sort of diabolical harassment so characteristic of Luther's writings, yet he does not eliminate from his account Malinowski's idea of the *rite*. The *rite* and *condition of the performer* are thus present; only the *formula* appears to be absent: "Satan may be overcome by contempt, *but in faith*, not in presumption." An examination of the rest of the quote confirms "faith" as Luther's requisite *condition of the performer*, and suggests the act of mockery ("contempt") of Satan as *rite* (rather than *formula*).

In the above quote we see an example of Luther's awareness of the anti-magic theological of Aquinas and thus of the era's theological norms for discussing it. Like Aquinas, Luther also attempts to make fundamental distinctions between illicit demon compulsion, on the one hand (i.e. "He is certainly not to be invited."), and licit demon compulsion, on the other, by assigning them fundamentally different mechanisms. In other words, Luther, like Aquinas, has two separate theories of magic – at least as seen from the perspective of the theorist, if not the theologian. Unlike Aquinas, Luther only allows that one of the two theories is efficacious: that form of demon compulsion, which belongs to the religious experience of the obedient Christian (illicit demon compulsion will, by definition, never work in Luther's model).

For Luther, this distinction fits firmly within his theology: the Devil and demons were real and present threats with which one regularly had to contend.[25] Luther's battles with the Devil are infamous, as are the accompanying inkwells and flatulence that Luther directed at him. Consequently, like Aquinas, Luther needed to account for some *authorized* licit protection from (if not authority over) the malign spirits that functioned as negative motivation in his theology. Yet Luther's own theology does place these spirits within a causal chain, as Aquinas does in *De Potentia* (Q 6, A 10). However, the Scholastic particulars regarding the intervention of demons and the possibility of their compulsion appear to have been part of the whole Aristotelian abomination that Luther sought to undo. It is therefore not surprising that Luther avoids the word "compel" (adiūrō)[26] and opts instead for "conquered/vanquished" (vincō)[27] in the previous example. Furthermore, in this way, Luther is able to frame "compulsion" (i.e. "magic") right out of the discussion.

We can see even more clearly, in the following example from Luther's *Hauspostille*,[28] how at least part of his solution to the theological problem of confronting

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[25] Heiko Oberman has persuasively argued that Luther's belief in the Devil, etc. was not only quite literal, but also theologically significant. For example: "Luther's world of thought is wholly distorted and apologetically misconstrued if his conception of the Devil is dismissed as a medieval phenomenon and only his faith in Christ retained as relevant or as the only decisive factor. Christ and the Devil were equally real to him: one was the perpetual intercessor for Christianity, the other was a menace to mankind till the end. To argue that Luther never overcame the medieval belief in the Devil says far too little; he even intensified it and lent to it additional urgency: Christ and Satan wage a cosmic war for mastery over Church and world. No one can evade involvement in this struggle. Even for the believer there is no refuge – neither monastery nor seclusion of the wilderness offer him a chance for escape. The Devil is the omnipresent threat, and exactly for this reason the faithful need the proper weapons for survival." Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther* (New York: Image Books, 1962) 104.

[26] The typical Latin would be "adiurare" - to "adjure."

[27] Luther's original macaronic passage in *Tischreden* gives this phrase in Latin: "Sathan contemnendo est vincendus." "Vincendus," is the future passive participle of vincō (to win, conquer), and thus, the passage is better rendered "Satan is conquered/vanquished by contempt."

[28] A "*Hauspostille*" is collection of religious or edifying stories and sayings for reading to the family.

supernatural evil was to break the old "Great Chain of Being" paradigm and to replace it with a new paradigm in which demon compulsion (at least as it had previously been understood as "binding") was unnecessary. He assumes instead a paradigm in which the Devil was already bound. Luther writes:

> Why should you fear? Why should you be afraid? Do you not know that the prince of this world has been judged? He is no lord, no prince any more. You have a different, a stronger Lord, Christ, who has overcome and bound him. Therefore let the prince and god of this world look sour, bare his teeth, make a great noise, threaten, and act in an unmannerly way; he can do no more than a bad dog on a chain, which may bark, run here and there, and tear at the chain. But because it is tied and you avoid it, it cannot bite you. So the devil acts toward every Christian. *Therefore everything depends on this that we do not feel secure but continue in the fear of God and in prayer; then the chained dog cannot harm us*. [Emphasis added] But this chained dog may at least frighten him who would be secure and go ahead without caution, although he may not come close enough to be bitten.[29]

Luther's admonishment to his reader not to feel secure but rather to "continue in the fear of God and in prayer" represents a further example of his emphasis on "faith." However, it also demonstrates the difficulty he has in breaking the paradigm of a performative (i.e. ritual) attainment of the requisite *condition of the performer* even as he attempts to shift

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[29] See: Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Werke: 1 : Abt. 1, Homiletische und Katechetische Schriften* (Erlangen: Heyder, 1862) 259. "Das wissen die Unchristen nit. Derhalb, ob sie schon bisweilen zum Wort kommen, und ansahen zu glauben; alsbald die Welt drumb saur sehen und zürnen will, förchten sie sich, und fallen wieder davon ab, wie Christus sagt im Gleichnuß von dem Samen auf dem Felsen. Die Christen aber halten fest. Denn da klingt ihnen die Straf des heiligen Geists immer im Herzen und Ohren: Was willt du dich förchten? warum willt erschrecken? weißt du denn nicht, daß der Fürst dieser Welt gerichtet ist? Er ist kein Herr, kein Fürst mehr. Du hast einen andered stärkeren Herrn, Christum, der ihn uberwunden und gebunden hat. Darumb laß den Fürsten und Gott dieser Welt saur sehen, die Zähn blecken, scharren, drowen, und sich ungebärdig stellen, er kann doch nicht mehr, denn ein böser Hund an einer Ketten; der mag bellen, hin und wieder laufen, an der Ketten sich reißen; er kann dich aber nit beißen, weil er angebunden ist, und du ihm aus dem Weg gehest. Also ist der Teufel gegn einem jeden Christen auch. Darumb liegt es alles daran, daß man nicht sicher sei, sonder sich in Gottesforcht und an das Gebet halte, so soll der Kettenhund uns nicht schaden mögen. Wer aber sichen sein, und ohn alle Sorg, sicher daher gehn wollte, den könnt solcher Kettenhund zum wenigsten schrecken, wenn er ihm so nahend nit käme, daß er ihn beißen könnt; wie man an den bösen Hunden siehet, daß sie lauschen und sich nit allweg hören lassen."

the paradigm for the encounter with malign spirits from compulsion to restraint.[30] Note that the paradigm we may extrapolate from the above quote effectively remains "Do X, and God will continue to restrain the Devil/demon." On the one hand, this paradigm does allow Luther to undermine (and thus counter) the discourse of magic as demon compulsion; on the other hand, the requisite *condition of the performer* in the encounter Luther describes is nevertheless ultimately reducible to the familiar magical logic of "*do ut des*" – the contractual "I give that you might give."[31] The ritual logic is nonetheless upheld: the Christian whom Luther describes does not affect (compel/repel) the demon by achieving purity as absence-of-defilement through ritual ablutions or obtaining purity-as-grace through participation in the sacraments, but he or she still has to do something to acquire it, even if that something is "have faith." If that obligation is not met, then there is no contract – no exchange.

With Luther's paradigm shift away from the compulsion of demons as magic (i.e. Solomonic paradigm) as well as away from the presence of mediated grace acquired through the sacraments (Scholastic) and toward the insurance of divine restraint of the Devil (and demons), he subverts the medieval discourse of *nigromantia* in his new theology. Christian souls are protected – at least those who are predestined – as long as they continue to fear and pray. The opportunity for illicit demon compulsion is logically

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[30] For instance, Luther paradoxically argues first in *On the Freedom of a Christian* (1520) that, "a Christian who, consecrated through faith, does good works will not become a better or more consecrated Christian through them (for they do nothing to increase faith)." See *Freedom*, Art 22. Later, however, he writes in *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) that he doesn't write against the Jews in the hope of converting them in *Against the Jews and Their Lies*. He does so, rather, so that we Germans may know from historical evidence what a Jew is so that we can warn our Christians against them as we warn against the Devil himself *in order to strengthen and honor our belief* [...]." See: Falk, 166.

[31] For further discussion of the ritual logic of "*do ut des*" in late antiquity, see: Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006 [1985]) 479.

closed. However, what Luther has failed to achieve is a satisfying explication of the underlying sin inherent in the attempt to do "magic," as compared to Aquinas' implication of the sin of idolatry as core to his theory of magic (i.e. explicit or implicit demonic pact). Aquinas' prohibition is logically contingent upon his acceptance of the reality of magic. In Aquinas' model, the very success of a magical act itself becomes evidence of the pact that he claims is necessary to achieve the effects of magic (*corpus delicti*, the evidence is provided by the crime). Luther, it will be recalled, allows for one of his theories of magic (i.e. licit, "religious" compulsion/restraint) to be efficacious, but not the other (i.e. illicit "magical"). Thus, in Luther's model of illicit magic, there is no evidence that a sin has been committed.

In this sense, Luther's association of the magical invocation of the name(s) of God with the sin of blasphemy in his first attempt to forbid magic, in the *Small Catechism*, was a significant break with Aquinas' strategy and thus with established Scholastic theology. We will discuss below why doing so was a necessity for Luther – a decision based on his theology of grace. The result of this action, however, was a relatively very weak prohibition. Luther was in competition with humanist Christian Cabalists to recatechize the German people. Changing the *condition of the performer* that had previously both ensured salvation and granted some degree of agency over malevolent forces no doubt made his anti-magic theology a difficult sell, as it both removed the possibility of any magical agency and rendered the effective "cost" of divine protection unknowable and intangible. Moreover, Luther's early prohibition of the magical invocation of the name(s) of God – without the later explicit denial of the efficacy – seem

to have implied that it was wrong to invoke the name of God *because* it was efficacious. In forbidding the *formula*, but not yet denying its efficacy, Luther appears to be trying to guard it very much in the way Malinowski suggests magicians treat *formulae*.[32] The point of this observation is not to suggest that Luther actually believed in the "magical" efficacy of the Hebrew name(s) of God, much less that Luther was a magician, but rather to suggest that, within a magical discourse (humanist Christian Cabala and medieval *nigromantia*), Luther's initial prohibition would likely have had the opposite effect of the one he intended. For, why forbid (i.e. guard) an inefficacious *formula*?

Where Aquinas had accounted for the marvelous effects of the magical arts by attributing them to intervention of demons in physical reality, Luther denied the physical

[32] As cited in the introduction, Malinowski writes, "The spell is the part of the magic which is kept secret and known only to the esoteric circle of practitioners. When a magic is handed over, whether by purchase, gift, or inheritance, only the spell has to be taught to the new recipient […]. When one speaks about magical knowledge, or inquires whether an individual knows some magic, this invariably refers to the formula, for the nature of the rite is always quite public knowledge" (418).

effects of magical arts, attributing their marvelous effects to demonic illusion.[33] (See example above.) For Luther, demons were real, but could not actually affect any real change. Moreover, where Aquinas conceded the validity (i.e. physical effects) of magical acts because doing so implicates the magician in the sin of idolatry, Luther attempted to implicate the magician in the sin of blasphemy. However, Luther also conceded the occasional possible apparent validity (albeit only an illusion) of the magical act, and so did not satisfactorily connect the magician with a "sin of magic" since he denied the actual efficacy of the magical act.[34] In short, the demons of Luther's anti-magic theology appeared – but only appeared – to produce magical effects. They could create nothing more than illusions, and this they did to seduce the magicians into the sin of blasphemy. Since, however, the effects of the demon's intervention were illusory and ephemeral, and

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[33] In Martin Luther's commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (1535), we find another example of a devil whose powers are seemingly limited to illusion and deception: who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? Paul calls the Galatians foolish and bewitched. In the fifth chapter he mentions sorcery among the works of the flesh, declaring that witchcraft and sorcery are real manifestations and legitimate activities of the devil. We are all exposed to the influence of the devil, because he is the prince and god of the world in which we live. Satan is clever. He does not only bewitch men in a crude manner, but also in a more artful fashion. He bedevils the minds of men with hideous fallacies. Not only is he able to deceive the self-assured, but even those who profess the true Christian faith. There is not one among us who is not at times seduced by Satan into false beliefs. This accounts for the many new battles we have to wage nowadays. But the attacks of the old serpent are not without profit to us, for they confirm our doctrine and strengthen our faith in Christ. Many a time we were wrestled down in these conflicts with Satan, but Christ has always triumphed and always will triumph. Do not think that the Galatians were the only ones to be bewitched by the devil. Let us realize that we too may be seduced by Satan. In this sentence Paul excuses the Galatians, while he blames the false apostles for the apostasy of the Galatians. As if he were saying: "I know your defection was not willful. The devil sent the false apostles to you, and they talked you into believing that you are justified by the law. With this our epistle we endeavor to undo the damage which the false apostles have inflicted upon you." like Paul, we struggle with the word of god against the fanatical Anabaptists of our day; and our efforts are not entirely in vain. The trouble is there are many who refuse to be instructed. They will not listen to reason; they will not listen to the scriptures, because they are bewitched by the tricky devil who can make a lie look like the truth. Since the devil has this uncanny ability to make us believe a lie until we would swear a thousand times it were the truth, we must not be proud, but walk in fear and humility, and call upon the lord Jesus to save us from temptation. Although I am a doctor of divinity, and have preached Christ and fought his battles for a long time, I know from personal experience how difficult it is to hold fast to the truth. I cannot always shake off Satan. I cannot always apprehend Christ as the scriptures portray him. Sometimes the devil distorts Christ to my vision. But thanks be to god, who keeps us in his word, in faith, and in prayer. The spiritual witchery of the devil creates in the heart a wrong idea of Christ. Those who share the opinion that a person is justified by the works of the law, are simply bewitched. Their belief goes against faith and Christ.

[34] We will return to the significance of the differences between the underlying sins inherent to the practice of magic in the two respective theologies below.

the actions of the magician – in Luther's own theology – are not causally related to the demonic illusions, Luther's anti-magic theology utterly fails (like William of Auvergne's) to connect the magician to the sin.

However strained this argument might sound today, it is structured within the constraints of the theological argumentation system that Luther inherited and was trying to combat. Like Aquinas, Luther describes "magic" as fundamentally distinct from licit (i.e. "religious") demon compulsion/restraint (as opposed to the late antique apologists and earlier medieval theologians who did not). With Aquinas, Luther also seems to have believed that the same grace necessary for salvation (justification) also conferred God's authority (i.e. conditional investiture) over malevolent spirits in licit encounters. However, Aquinas' solution to the problem of extra-ecclesial (i.e. illicit) demon compulsion by effectively controlling access to the flow of grace by limiting it to mediation through the Church's sacraments was not open to Luther because of other aspects of Luther's grace theology. Luther was actively working against an idea of grace that was only mediated through the Church.

Much as Aquinas' manipulation of his theology of sacramental grace effectively served to police religious orthopraxy (e.g. curtail the practice of ritual "Solomonic" magic), Luther's own theology of sacramental grace effectively served to provide a solution to the abuses within the Roman Church (e.g. famously, the sale of indulgences). Luther uncoupled the mediation of grace (necessary for both salvation and the authorization to compel demons) from the sacraments. According to Luther's theology, all who had faith received God's grace directly from God. However, Luther's solution to

the problem of abuses, facilitated by Aquinas' Scholastic theology of sacramental grace, reintroduced one of the very problems that such Scholastic theology had served to address: the apparent Christian authorization to practice "magic" (compel demons) by invoking the name(s) of God. In other words, by undoing mediation of grace in Aquinas' sacramental theology, Luther inadvertently reintroduced one of the problems Aquinas' theology had served to correct.

In Luther's theology of grace, all who believed were justified (sanctified). What Luther seems not to have predicted is the persistence of Aquinas' teaching from *De Potentia* that sanctifying grace also confers authority over demons. We have already cited examples of the persistence of that model including, importantly, its inclusion in Johann Weyer's *De Praestigiis Daemonum* (1563), almost 20 years after Luther's death.[35] In the doctrinal confusion of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, this model appeared to apply whether "demons" were understood as the fallen angels of Aquinas' theology, Ficino's impersonal planetary spirits, or anything in between. Moreover, it was at that same historical moment – the moment of Luther's new grace theology – that the magico-theological Tetragrammaton/*Shem ha-Mephorash* discourse reached fever pitch, with numerous Christian Hebraists and theologians industriously elaborating a Christian Cabala based in large part on speculations about the power of the name of God (including

[35] Weyer writes, "Rightly, therefore does St. Thomas say: 'If Solomon performed exorcisms at the time when he was in a state of salvation, those exorcisms could have had the power to constrain demons – as a result of the power of God. If, however, he performed them at the time when he adored idols – i.e., if he performed them through the arts of magic – then those exorcisms had no power to constrain the demons.'" Johann Weyer, Benjamin G. Kohl, John Shea, John Weber, Erik Midelfort, and Helen Bacon. *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer, De Praestigiis Daemonum*. Tempe (Ariz.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998) 473.

the name of Jesus or Pentagrammaton) and the Hebrew alphabet.[36] Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494) and his *De Arte Cabalistica* (1517) are the two most famous early examples in the Northern Renaissance with which Luther would have been primarily concerned.

Luther's theology of grace not only complicated his own anti-magic theology (i.e. inadvertently authorizing all who believe), but also by leaving Luther no theological (as opposed to rational) grounds for objecting to the invocation of the name(s) of God for magical purposes other than blasphemy. His solution, in turn, seems not only to have been quite ineffective, but also to have inadvertently lent credibility to Christian Cabalists' as well as medieval nigromancers' claims of the "magical" efficacy of the names of God. Luther's solution of undermining the efficacious power of the name of God (i.e. the *formula*) rather than focusing on demonic pacts (i.e. *condition of the performer*) allowed him to address both medieval *nigromantia* and the emergent Christian Cabala simultaneously. However, it also meant that Aquinas' use of the sin of idolatry (Solomon's paradigmatic sin from 1 Kings 11) as the basis for objecting to the practice of magic, was no longer logically applicable. In removing idols (i.e. demons) from his anti-magic theology, Luther also removed the possibility of idolatry. By contrast, according to Thomas Aquinas, the effects of magic were achieved through demonic intervention as a result of explicit or implicit pact with a demon. The sin for which Solomon lost his favor with God was that he had rendered unto idols the worship

[36] For a thorough discussion of the Hebrew name of God in late medieval and early modern Christian theology, see Robert J Wilkinson, *Tetragrammaton: Western Christians and the Hebrew Name of God: from the Beginnings to the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2015), especially Chapter 9, "Early Christian Kabbalists and the Tetragrammaton," 313-350.

and service that belonged to God alone: *latria*. Aquinas had forbidden magic on such grounds in his *De Potentia*.[37] Concerning the significance of works in *latria*, there can be no misinterpreting Aquinas, for elsewhere, in the *Summa Theologica II-I*, Q 108, A 1, resp., he states quite explicitly:

> I answer that, as stated above (I-II:106:2), the New Law consists chiefly in the grace of the Holy Ghost, which is shown forth by faith that worketh through love. Now men become receivers of this grace through God's Son made man, Whose humanity grace filled first, and thence flowed forth to us. Hence it is written (John 1:14): "The Word was made flesh," and afterwards: "full of grace and truth"; and further on: "Of His fullness we all have received, and grace for grace." Hence it is added that "grace" and truth came by Jesus Christ." Consequently it was becoming that the grace flows from the incarnate Word should be given to us by means of certain external sensible objects; and that from this inward grace, whereby the flesh is subjected to the Spirit, certain external works should ensue.
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> Accordingly external acts may have a twofold connection with grace. In the first place, as leading in some way to grace. Such are the sacramental acts which are instituted in the New Law, e.g. Baptism, the Eucharist, and the like.
>
> In the second place there are those external acts which ensue from the promptings of grace: and herein we must observe a difference. For there are some which are necessarily in keeping with, or in opposition to inward grace consisting in faith that worketh through love. Such external works are prescribed or forbidden in the New Law; thus confession of faith is prescribed, and denial of faith is forbidden; for it is written (Matthew 10:32-33) "(Every one) that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father . . . But he that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father." On the other hand, there are works which are not necessarily opposed to, or in keeping with faith that worketh through love. Such works are not prescribed or forbidden in the New Law, by virtue of its primitive institution; but have been left by the Lawgiver, i.e. Christ, to the discretion of each individual. And so to each one it is free to decide what he should do or avoid; and to each superior, to direct his subjects in such matters as regards what they must do or avoid. Wherefore also in this respect the Gospel is

[37] For more on this, see the discussion in chapter 2.

> called the "law of liberty" [Cf. Reply to Objection 2]: since the Old Law decided many points and left few to man to decide as he chose.[38]

Of idolatry, Aquinas writes in *II-II* Q 94, A 1, resp.:

> Now just as this divine worship was given to sensible creatures by means of sensible signs, such as sacrifices, games, and the like, so too was it given to a creature represented by some sensible form or shape, which is called an "idol." Yet divine worship was given to idols in various ways. For some, by means of a nefarious art, constructed images which produced certain effects by the power of the demons: wherefore they deemed that the images themselves contained something God-like, and consequently that divine worship was due to them. This was the opinion of Hermes Trismegistus [De Natura Deorum, ad Asclep], as Augustine states (De Civ. Dei viii, 23): while others gave divine worship not to the images, but to the creatures represented thereby. The Apostle alludes to both of these (Romans 1:23-25). For, as regards the former, he says: "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things," and of the latter he says: "Who worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

Finally, in his response to the second objection to that question, the connection between *latria*, outward signs, and the sin of idolatry is made explicit:

> The term latria may be taken in two senses. On one sense it may denote a human act pertaining to the worship of God: and then its signification remains the same, to whomsoever it be shown, because, in this sense, the thing to which it is shown is not included in its definition. Taken thus latria is applied univocally, whether to true religion or to idolatry, just as the payment of a tax is univocally the same, whether it is paid to the true or to a false king. On another sense latria denotes the same as religion, and then, since it is a virtue, it is essential thereto that divine worship be given to whom it ought to be given; and in this way latria is applied equivocally to the latria of true religion, and to idolatry: just as prudence is applied equivocally to the prudence that is a virtue, and to that which is carnal.[39]

As is evident here, idol-*latria* (*idolatria* in Latin) prior to Luther had been understood as a sin of bad works, not a sin of bad faith. Luther would have known this sin in his native

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[38] Thomas Aquinas, "Question 108, Things That Are Contained in the New Law," Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, *Summa Theologiae: Things That Are Contained in the New Law (Prima Secundae Partis, Q. 108)* (2016) www.newadvent.org/summa/2108.htm.

[39] Aquinas, *ST II-II*, Q 94, A 1, resp. and ad 2, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3094.htm.

German as *Götzendienst* (literally, "the *service* of idols"). Thus, whatever else Luther considered when he addressed the rising practice of "magic" among Protestants, he must have recognized that he could not assert a special negative merit of magic as the service of idols without beginning to undermine his own argument against any sanctifying merit of works done in the service of God. For why would service misdirected to idols anger God, if such service had no merit?[40]

Not only had Luther removed the possibility of the sin of idolatry from his anti-magic theology, but, as a result of his own theology of grace, he had effectively removed it – at least as it had been previously described – as a possible sin altogether. The meaning of the First Commandment upon which Aquinas had based his anti-magic theology becomes somewhat vague in the light of Luther's doctrine of *sola fide*. By denying the spiritual merit of good works, Luther had unwittingly reopened the loophole of Solomonic "magic" (i.e. the compulsion of demons by the efficacious name of God) that Aquinas had closed in *De Potentia* by concluding that demons are not compelled by sensible means, not even divine names, but rather through the idolatry inherent to explicit or implicit demonic pacts. Logically, if *latria* alone could not move God to mercy, then *idolatria* alone could not move God to anger. As a theologian, then, Luther faced a conundrum: What were the consequences of *doing* magic if all work (whether "good" or

[40] This was Luther's theological bind and possibly the source of his choice to translate *superstitio*, which for Aquinas had been synonymous with *idolatria*, as *Aberglaube* rather than *Götzendienst*. See, for example, Article 24 of *On the Freedom of a Christian*, which begins, "On the one hand, for he who is without faith, no good work is conducive toward piety and salvation; on the other, no evil work will make him evil and damned. But unbelief, which makes the person [...] evil, does evil and damned works. Therefore if one will be pious or evil, one begins not with works but with faith" (Helfferich, 34).

not) was equally damnable without faith?[41] Was it possible to merit God's wrath with "bad" works (e.g. idolatry, magic, etc.) even though it was impossible to merit his favor with good works? How was "magically" invoking God's name any more sinful than doing anything else "without faith?"

On the level of everyday life and tradition, Luther's first address to the problem of magic was thus less than a success. Not surprisingly, in 1543, Luther drastically changed his anti-magic theology from its earlier expression in the *Small Catechism* (1529) to its full and final expression in *Vom Schemhamphoras*. Yet Luther's grace theology left him few options in revising his anti-magic theology: he had removed demons (idols) and left only the name(s) of God. How could he connect the invocation of God with sin in a religion defined entirely by faith? Because he insisted that the soul was justified by faith alone (*iustificatio sola fide*) and that "works" had no merit, he would have to find a way to equate the magical invocation of the name(s) of God with bad faith. Aquinas had been able to implicate the magician in the sin of idolatry because of the involvement of the demon in the effects of magic (according to his theory of magic). Because Luther's anti-magic theology was not demonological and focused instead on the *Shem ha-Mephorash* (i.e. on the *formula* rather than the *condition of the performer*), Luther would, in order to achieve the same effect, have to find a way to argue that the magician who "magically" invokes the name of God was actually guilty of invoking a false god, yet even then his

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[41] In his 1520 *On the Freedom of a Christian*, for example, Luther articulates this idea: "Thus a Christian who, consecrated through faith, does good works will not become a better or more consecrated Christian through them (for they do nothing to increase faith). Indeed, if he did not already believe and was not a true Christian, then all of his works would count for nothing, but would instead be purely foolish, wanton, damnable sins." See: Martin Luther and Tryntje Helfferich, *On the Freedom of a Christian: With Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 2013) 33.

denial of the physical effects of magic would leave him with no proof that a sin had been committed.

This would seem to be impossible with regard to the invocation of the Christian god by his Hebrew name, yet in the full and final version of Luther's anti-magic theology, this is exactly what he attempts to do. However, in order for us to properly clarify and contextualize Luther's theological strategy, it will first be necessary to make the digression (promised in the introduction) into a brief comparison of Aquinas and Luther's constructs of "grace" and "faith."

Digression: Comparative Discussion of "Grace" and "Faith" in Aquinas and Luther

I have been arguing for a reading of Luther's construct of "faith" as the next turn (after Aquinas' "grace") in the metaphoricization and spiritualization of purity as *condition of the performer* in the Christian discourse of demon compulsion. That argument depends on the continuation of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons continues in shaping that Christian discourse.

However, because both "grace" and "faith" are discursive constructs and because Scholastic and Lutheran theologies represent distinct discourses, we must here digress briefly to discuss how the concepts were being redefined in this difference between Luther and Aquinas. Tracking this difference is necessary because these theological discourses had not merely turned from "purity" as the presence-of-grace to "purity" as the presence-of-faith within a single discourse (either Scholastic or Lutheran), but rather

from "grace" to "faith" across what had become two distinct theological discourses. In other words, by the time Luther works through his problem with magic, Aquinas and Luther do not mean the same things when each of them refers to "grace" or "faith," and therefore, likewise, do not agree on the difference between the terms. As we shall see, this necessitates a comparison of the terms' respective attributes within their theological discursive spaces. My particular goal is to track any changes (i.e. spiritualization and metaphoricization, how they are rendered abstract and polyvalent) in their *de facto* descriptions of the *condition of the performer* within the framework the still-persisting apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons.

Needless to say, "purity" as the overarching category is also a discursive construct. However, its value in the present project is *descriptive* rather than *prescriptive*, in the consideration of Aquinas and Luther's uses of both "grace" and "faith." For our purposes, the minimal definition of "purity" (in the theoretical rather than theological sense) as requisite *condition of the performer* for demon compulsion (i.e. "magic") within Christian tradition (pre-Scholastic, Scholastic, and Protestant) is sufficient. Indeed, this minimal definition allows us to consider both presence-of-grace and presence-of-faith as manifestations of the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" developing from the much earlier Levitical manifestation as absence-of-contamination. Any attempt at a more precise or limiting definition seems to obscure the consideration of the presence-of-faith as a spiritualization or metaphoricization of "purity."

Logically, any discursive theological construct (such as "purity") that tends toward abstraction as it evolves would eventually lead to notions so far removed from the

original as to be unrecognizable. This, we suggest, is the case with "faith" and "purity." In consequence, two questions present themselves. First, how can a given late and presumably unrecognizable instantiation of "purity" (i.e. "faith") be demonstrated to be related in this way to a much earlier one (i.e. Levitical, ritual "purity")? Second, What is the value of conceptualizing the latter (i.e. "faith") as some version of the former (i.e. "purity") rather than, say, referring to them both by a third and more theoretical term?

Both questions are answered by reference to the apocryphal Solomon narrative, as we shall now see. Both "faith" in Lutheran theological discourse and "grace" in Scholastic discourse may be causally related to the idea of "purity" in ancient Judaism because they all refer to the same element in the discourse space of demon compulsion developing out of the original apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons – the *condition of the performer*. As we have seen, the successful performer must always be "pure." The use of Malinowski's *condition of the performer* to differentiate between these two discourses, however, does not capture the nuance of the evolution I am tracing here, no matter that it allows us to see how the original terms have been spiritualized and metaphoricized. For this reason, we use both concepts here in combination: *condition of the performer* and "pure" and distinguish the earliest forms of "purity" by using the modifier, "Levitical." The primary value of this comparison, which extends well beyond this study, is the strong suggestion of the performativity of "faith" (or acts of faith) as *efficacious ritual* within Protestant religious practice, a suggestion with implications for understanding the relationship of belief to practice in modern scholarship concerned with religion and magic.

Let us now turn directly to how Luther's theology of "grace" (not limited to Christian discourses of demon compulsion) forced a turn in the *condition of the performer* much in the way that Aquinas' effective commodification of grace made it possible to conceive of grace as something that could be obtained. In fact, as we shall see, Luther's turn in the *condition of the performer* (from "purity" defined as presence-of-grace to presence-of-faith) may be understood as – to some extent – causally related to Aquinas' turn. As we compare their two moves, it will emerge that Luther's turn (i.e. justification by faith alone) served to undermine the abuses of the Roman Church that were made possible as a result of Aquinas' commodification of grace. We turn now to two questions: how and why Luther arrived at such a construct in his theology of grace, as well as the implications of that grace theology for the *condition of the performer* as "pure" in Christian discourses of demon compulsion and "magic."

The documentation of what Luther did is compelling and familiar to many. In a series of heated debates carried out primarily through open missives,[42] Luther argued that it was impossible to earn one's way into heaven by means of "good works" because works were meaningless without faith.[43] In the *Augsburg Confession* (Article 20, "Of Good Works"), he writes:

[O]ur teachers have instructed the churches concerning faith as follows:—

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[42] Most famously with the Dutch humanist theologian Erasmus of Rotterdam in a series of tracts concerned with the debate over free will and merit.

[43] See, for example, Luther's *On the Freedom of a Christian*, Art. 25: "For where these [doctrines] contain the false stipulation and the perverse opinion that we become pious and saved through works, then already such works are not good and completely damnable, for they are not free and blaspheme the grace of God, who alone makes us pious and saved through faith. This is something works cannot accomplish, yet they presume to be able to do it and thereby usurp grace in its work and honor" (Helfferich, p. 36).

> First, that our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins, grace, and justification, but that we obtain this only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ's sake, who alone has been set forth the Mediator and Propitiation, 1 Tim. 2, 5, in order that the Father may be reconciled through Him. Whoever, therefore, trusts that by works he merits grace, despises the merit and grace of Christ, and seeks a way to God without Christ, by human strength, […]
>
> Men are also admonished that here the term "faith" does not signify merely the knowledge of the history, […] but also the effect of the history—namely, this article: the forgiveness of sins, to wit, that we have grace, righteousness, and forgiveness of sins through Christ. […]
>
> Furthermore, it is taught on our part that it is necessary to do good works, not that we should trust to merit grace by them, but because it is the will of God. It is only by faith that forgiveness of sins is apprehended, and that, for nothing. And because through faith the Holy Ghost is received, hearts are renewed and endowed with new affections, so as to be able to bring forth good works. […] Besides, they are in the power of the devil who impels men to divers sins, to ungodly opinions, to open crimes. This we may see in the philosophers, who, although they endeavored to live an honest life could not succeed, but were defiled with many open crimes. Such is the feebleness of man when he is without faith and without the Holy Ghost, and governs himself only by human strength.[44]

and in Article 4, "Of Justification":

> Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.[45]

Familiarly, this position puts Luther at odds with the Scholastics of the Roman Church who followed Aquinas. According to Luther, the grace necessary for salvation is achieved "through faith," whereas according to Aquinas, grace is achieved through

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[44] *AC* 20:8, 9, 23, 27-29, and 32-34 in *Triglot Concordia* (1921), 53, 55, & 57.

[45] *AC* 4, in *Triglot Concordia* (1921), 45.

participation in the sacraments. "Faith" and "participation in the sacraments" would appear to be two different and not necessarily mutually exclusive premises.

On its own, Luther's position thus has the appearance of a straw man argument vis-à-vis the position of his Roman interlocutors, who did not actually assert that one could earn one's way into heaven *with* good works but *without* faith.[46] What is at stake in their debate is whether "faith" is an aspect of grace[47] – in other words, whether it is even possible to have "faith" without already having grace. The disjuncture between these arguments, in fact, results from two different and irreconcilable premises. On the one side, Catholic orthodoxy held that original prelapsarian grace – the state in which Adam and Eve first existed in Eden before the Fall – had been gravely wounded in the Fall of mankind,[48] but not extinguished. Opposing this position, Luther insisted that original sin

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[46] Council of Trent (1547), Session 6 Canon 1 states: "The holy Synod declares first, that, for the correct and sound understanding of the doctrine of Justification, it is necessary that each one recognise and confess, that, whereas all men had lost their innocence in the prevarication of Adam-having become unclean, and, as the apostle says, by nature children of wrath, as (this Synod) has set forth in the decree on original sin,-they were so far the servants of sin, and under the power of the devil and of death, that not the Gentiles only by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter itself of the law of Moses, were able to be liberated, or to arise, therefrom; although free will, attenuated as it was in its powers, and bent down, was by no means extinguished in them." Further in Canon 8, it states, "And whereas the Apostle saith, that man is justified by faith and freely, those words are to be understood in that sense which the perpetual consent of the Catholic Church hath held and expressed; to wit, that we are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation, the foundation, and the root of all Justification; without which it is impossible to please God, and to come unto the fellowship of His sons: but we are therefore said to be justified freely, because that none of those things which precede justification-whether faith or works-merit the grace itself of justification. For, if it be a grace, it is not now by works, otherwise, as the same Apostle says, grace is no more grace." See: Adrien Nampon, *Catholic Doctrine As Defined by the Council of Trent: Expounded in a Series of Conferences Delivered in Geneva ... Translated from the French ... by a Member of the University Oxford* (Philadelphia, 1869) 281, 285f.

[47] Against the established theological logic, Luther's position presented a logical inconsistency: One could not receive grace through faith because grace was believed to necessarily precede faith. Regarding this catalytic concept of the relationship between grace and faith within established Catholic theology, see Augustine's *On the Predestination of the Saints* (*B I*: 4). Augustine writes, "[G]race precedes faith; otherwise, if faith precedes grace, beyond a doubt will also precedes it, because there cannot be faith without will. But if grace precedes will, certainly it precedes all obedience; it also precedes love, by which alone God is truly and pleasantly obeyed. And all these things grace works in him to whom it is given, and in whom it is given, and in whom it precedes all these things. See: Philip Schaff and Aurelius Augustinus, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Vol. 5* (New York: The Christian literature company, 1887) 542.

[48] In *Discourse Concerning Free Will*, Erasmus writes: "One is the grace naturally present in us, *vitiated*, as we said, but not destroyed, by sin; some call it a 'natural influence (*influxum naturalem*)'" See: Clarence H Miller, Peter

had obliterated original prelapsarian grace and, consequently, after the Fall, humanity existed in a state of total depravity.[49] This position is also reflected in the *Augsburg Confession* (1530)

> Article II: Of Original Sin.
>
> Also they [i.e. Lutherans] teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost.
>
> They condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.[50]

Both Luther and the Scholastics of the Roman Church agreed that mankind had been created pure and subsequently defiled itself through disobedience.[51] They also agreed that the defilement (i.e. original sin) was hereditary.[52] Furthermore, they agreed that it was

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Macardle, Desiderius Erasmus, and Martin Luther. *Erasmus and Luther: The Battle Over Free Will* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub, 2012) 9.

[49] On Luther's teachings regarding total depravity, see for example: Article 2, "Of Original Sin," in the *Confessio Augustana* (1530), which states, 1] "[T]hey [i.e. Lutherans] teach that since the fall of Adam all men begotten in the natural way are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with 2] concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost. 3] They condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason." See also the *Formula concordiae* (1577): I. Original Sin, "[Original sin] is an entire want or lack of the concreated hereditary righteousness in Paradise, or of God's image, according to which man was originally created in truth, holiness, and righteousness; and at the same time an inability and unfitness for all the things of God, or, as the Latin words read: *Desciptio peccati originalis detrahit naturae non renovatae et dona et vim seu facultatem et actus inchoandi et efficiendi spiritualia*; that is: The definition of original sin takes away from the unrenewed nature the gifts, the power, and all activity for beginning and effecting anything in spiritual things." For additional discussion, see: Robert R. Williams, "Sin and Evil," in Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King, *Christian Theology: An Introduction to Its Traditions and Tasks* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1994) 204.

[50] *AC* 2, "Of Original Sin." See: *Triglot Concordia = Concordia Triglotta: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, German-Latin-English* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1921) 43 & 45.

[51] Again, this shared Christian teaching accounts for "purity" as condition of the performer in Christian discourse as the presence (as opposed to absence) of something. Effectively, it is only possible to remove the contamination of sin through the application of something else (grace, faith).

[52] For a general orientation to Augustine's doctrine of original sin, see: Ernesto Bonaiuti and Giorgio La Piana "The Genesis of St. Augustine's Idea of Original Sin, "*The Harvard Theological Review* 10. 2, (1917) 159–175.

beyond humanity's power to purify itself without God' s help (i.e. grace). Where they disagreed was whether any of the original God-given grace had survived the Fall.

According to the Roman Church's position, humanity still had *some* grace, which allowed the individual to choose to do good works (including choosing to have "faith").[53] According to Luther, the individual was incapable of choosing to do good works without receiving grace *through* faith.[54] The Scholastics insisted that grace preceded faith, and Luther insisted on a model of grace *through* faith, which suggests that faith necessarily precedes grace. These questions belong to the sixteenth century debate over free will, but may perhaps be more easily understood outside the context of theology as a proxy debate or as necessary theological preconditions for a different debate. That debate asked: What was at stake was the question of who had grace (or grace-as-purity) and who did not, and whether or how one could obtain grace (or more of it). Prior to Luther, the Roman Church had effectively created a spiritual economy in which it held the monopoly on the mediation of God's grace, a role justified by Aquinas' teaching on the mediation of grace

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[53] See, for example, Augustine's *On the Predestination of the Saints II*, 41: "Therefore, also grace precedes faith; otherwise, if faith precedes grace, beyond a doubt will also precedes it, because there cannot be faith without will. But if grace precedes faith because it precedes will, certainly it precedes all obedience; it also precedes charity, by which alone God is truly and pleasantly obeyed" in: Augustine, Marcus Dods, John R. King, Peter Holmes, Richard Stothert, J G. Cunningham, James F. Shaw, Arthur W. Haddan, William Findlay, Steward D. F. Salmond, John Gibb, James Innes, Joseph G. Pilkington, and Robert E. Wallis, *The Works of Aurelius Augustine: A New Translation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1993) 210.

[54] For Luther's seminal theological articulation of the reception of "grace through faith," see the Smalcald Articles, Part two, Article 1: "The first and chief article is this: Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification (Romans 3:24-25). He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John1:29), and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6). All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works and merits, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Romans 3:23-25). This is necessary to believe. This cannot be otherwise acquired or grasped by any work, law or merit. Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us ... Nothing of this article can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and everything else falls" (Mark 13:31). Paul T McCain, W H. T. Dau, and F Bente, *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions: a Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Pub. House, 2009) 289. For further discussion of Luther's "grace through faith" theology, see Markus Wriedt, "Luther's Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Luther* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 88–94.

through the sacraments.[55] Consequently, it also created a monopoly on salvation (i.e. one's *state of grace* or sanctification) and therefore, as pertains to the present study, on licit (i.e. "religious") demon compulsion, as well. In that economy, the gift of God's grace was potentially available to anyone, but only to those in communion with the Church, since grace was mediated through the sacraments.

Aquinas had equated the *condition of the performer* necessary for licit demon compulsion in *De Potentia* with the condition necessary for salvation (sanctification/ justification), effectively making orthodoxy and orthopraxy the only ways to achieve the purity-as-grace necessary for licit demon compulsion (i.e. exorcism as opposed to illicit demon compulsion as "magic"). In contrast, in order to wrest grace – and with it salvation – from the Church's control, Luther advanced a theology of *iustificatio sola fide* (justification by faith alone) which did not depend on the mediation of grace through the sacraments.[56] According to Luther, those who have "faith" receive grace that is both sanctifying and gratuitously given (i.e. does not require "merit").[57] Though perhaps unintended, a secondary consequence of Luther's position on grace and salvation was its

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[55] Again, Aquinas' sacramental theology makes the Church's sacraments particular conduits of sanctifying grace. See, *ST* Q 61, A1, ad 2: "God's grace is a sufficient cause of man's salvation. But God gives grace to man in a way which is suitable to him. Hence it is that man needs the sacraments that he may obtain grace."

[56] See: Carl R. Trueman “Reformers, Puritans, and Evangelicals: the Lay Connection.” *The Rise of the Laity in Evangelical Protestantism*, edited by Deryck W. Lovegrove, London ; New York : Routledge, 2002, pp. 17–35. Trueman writes, "Luther formulated his understanding of the universal priesthood of all believers in 1520. This is significant, for at one level the term captures in a nutshell Luther's understanding of grace, justification and salvation. These are not mediated via the institutional church or by the priestly hierarchy of that church, but are the direct privilege of every believer who through faith can have dealings with God in Christ on a personal basis" (19).

[57] *AC* 13:1-3 "Of the Use of the Sacraments": "Of the use of the sacraments they teach that the sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises where are offered and set forth through the sacraments. The therefore condemn those who teach the sacraments justify by the outward act, and who do not teach that, in the use of the sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required" in *Triglot Concordia* (1921), 49.

implications for demon compulsion (by which "magic" had been defined in the apocryphal Solomon narrative since antiquity, as outlined above). What is more, these implications were not unimportant for Luther, who so frequently and infamously claimed to battle with the devil. Nor were they insignificant to a sixteenth-century Germany that was replete with medieval *nigromantia*, Renaissance magic, Scholastic demonology, and witch trials.

Luther and the Roman Church both agreed that grace was necessary for salvation and both seem to have agreed that a state of salvation (i.e. justification or sanctification) was necessary for compelling or "overcoming" demons. The difference in their positions was that, according to the Roman Church, there were at least two different kinds of grace, whereas according to Luther, there was only one.[58] What Luther argued against had been spelled out by Aquinas in the *Summa Theologia* (1225-1274) as a distinction between *gratia gratum faciens* ("grace that makes pleasing [to God]," now called "sanctifying grace") and *gratia gratis data* ("grace gratuitously given"). Thus, when Luther argued that works do not justify (sanctify), he was essentially rejecting and disregarding the distinction between the two types of grace, which Aquinas makes in Quaestio CXI, "De divisione gratiae" ("On the divisions of grace"), in the *Summa Theologica*:

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[58] In his *Discourse Concerning Free Will* (1524), Erasmus explains: "And so Augustine teaches that man, in thrall to sin, cannot change his ways so as to amend his life, or do anything that contributed to salvation, unless he divinely impelled by the freely given grace of God to desire what leads to eternal life. Some call this grace 'prevenient'; Augustine calls it 'operating,' for even faith, the doorway to salvation, is itself a freely given gift of God. The charity added to faith by an even more generous gift of the Holy Spirit he calls cooperating grace, for it unceasingly helps those are making an effort until they achieve their goal; but altogether free will and grace cooperate in the same task, grace is the leader, not merely a partner. Some theologians, however, make a distinction here saying that if you consider it according to the merit involved, the more important is grace. And yet faith, the reason that we desire what leads to salvation, and charity, the reason that we do not desire it in vain, are distinguished not so much in time as in nature (though they can both increase with time.) And so, since 'grace' means 'favor freely bestowed,' it is possible to posit three or indeed even four kinds of grace." See: Clarence H Miller, Peter Macardle, Desiderius Erasmus, and Martin Luther. *Erasmus and Luther: The Battle Over Free Will* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub, 2012) 8f.

> I respond: As the Apostle says in Romans 13:1, "Things that are from God are well-ordered." Now as Dionysius says in *De Caelesti Hierarchia*, the order of things consists in some things being led back to God through other things. Therefore, since grace is ordered toward man's being led back to God, this is done in a certain order, viz., with some being led back to God by others. Accordingly, there are two kinds of grace:
>
> (a) One kind of grace is such that through it a man is himself joined to God, and this is called *sanctifying grace* (*gratia gratum faciens*).
>
> (b) On the other hand, the second kind of grace is such that through it one man cooperates with another in order to be led back to God. Now a gift of this sort is called *gratuitously given grace* (*gratia gratis data*) since (a) it lies beyond the power of nature and (b) is given to a man beyond his personal merits (*supra meritum personae*); however, because it is given not in order that the man himself should be justified by it, but rather in order that he cooperate in the justification of others, it is not called sanctifying grace. And it is of this kind of grace that the Apostle is speaking in 1 Corinthians 12:7, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for its usefulness," viz., its usefulness for others.[59]

For Aquinas, in order to merit sanctifying grace, some effort (i.e. "work") is required on the part of the individual. The good works that constituted that effort were possible because of the presence of "grace gratuitously given" (*gratia gratis data*), but sanctification (justification) was not an aspect of *gratia gratis data* (grace gratuitously given). The grace economy of the Catholic Church was built on this idea of a distinct sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*), as was the idea of a distinct sanctifying grace to which Luther objected. Moreover, the Scholastics solved the theological problem of how someone who has not received sanctifying grace (through the sacraments) might be moved to seek it in the first place by accepting this differentiation between these two

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[59] Aquinas, *ST* I-II, Q 111, A 1, resp.: "Respondeo dicendum quod, sicut apostolus dicit, ad Rom. XIII, *quae a Deo sunt, ordinata sunt*. In hoc autem ordo rerum consistit, quod quaedam per alia in Deum reducuntur; ut Dionysius dicit, in Cael. Hier. Cum igitur gratia ad hoc ordinetur ut homo reducatur in Deum, ordine quodam hoc agitur, ut scilicet quidam per alios in Deum reducantur. Secundum hoc igitur duplex est gratia. Una quidem per quam ipse homo Deo coniungitur, quae vocatur gratia gratum faciens. Alia vero per quam unus homo cooperatur alteri ad hoc quod ad Deum reducatur. Huiusmodi autem donum vocatur gratia gratis data, quia supra facultatem naturae, et supra meritum personae, homini conceditur, sed quia non datur ad hoc ut homo ipse per eam iustificetur, sed potius ut ad iustificationem alterius cooperetur, ideo non vocatur gratum faciens. Et de hac dicit apostolus, I ad Cor. XII, *unicuique datur manifestatio spiritus ad utilitatem*, scilicet aliorum.

distinct forms of grace. In other words, *gratia gratis data* (grace gratuitously given) solves the problem of what might move an unbaptized sinner to seek baptism (or "have faith") and thus begin to receive sanctifying grace through the sacraments.

For Luther, the soul exists after the Fall in a state of total depravity, with no free will; through the act of faith, it is filled with one grace that is both gratuitously given (*gratia gratis data*) and sanctifying (*gratia gratum faciens*). In contrast, the position of the Roman Church was that, after the Fall, the soul existed with the wounded or diminished original grace gratuitously given (*gratia gratis data*). That grace, moreover, was sufficient to preserve free will so that man was capable of choosing to do good, thereby meriting sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*), not because of his own inherent goodness, but because of the gift of God's grace that remained in him. The Roman Church taught that, by exercising one's free will and choosing to do good works, one could acquire more and more sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*) because "*facientibus quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam*" ("To those who do what lies within them God denies not grace").[60] The significance of this series of assumptions is

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60 "For the origin of the formula and its development up through the twelfth century, see Michael Landgraf, *Dogmengeschichte der Frühscholastik*, vol. I.1, Regensburg 1952, pp. 249-264. In Saint Thomas there is a decided change in interpretation between his early commentary on Lombard and the *Summa theologica*, e.g. II *Sent*. d. 28 q. 1 art. 4: 'Et ideo aliis consentiendo dicimus quod ad gratiam gratum facientem habendem ex solo libero arbitrio se homo potest praeparare, faciendo enim quod in se est gratiam a Deo consequitur. Hoc autem solum in nobis est quod in potestate liberi arbitrii constitutum est.' *S.T*. I-II q. 109 art. 6 ad 2: 'Ad secundum illud Joan. 15.5, Sine me nihil potestis facere. Et ideo cum dicitur homo facere quod in se est dicitur hoc esse in potestate hominis secundum quod est motus a Deo.' See also *ibid*., I-II q. 112 arts. 2 and 3. Giles of Rome interprets the formula in a way similar to Thomas's mature opinion, '*In epist. ad Romanos,' Primus tomus operum D. Aegidii Romani*, Rome 1555, fol, fol. 76v: 'Dicendum quod nos laribus rebus, propter quod adgeneratur in nobis forma et habitus saecularibus rebus, propter quod adgeneratur in nobis forma et habitu saecularis concupiscientiae. Sed tamen per auxilium divinum possumus haec vitare. Verum quia Deus quantum est de se semper est paratus, ideo dicitur hoc esse in potestate mostra, quia utinam ita essemus parati facere quod in nobis est, sicut Deus, paratus est facere quod in se est.' For the formula in Gabriel Biel (ca. 1410-1495), see Heiko A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology*, Cambridge, Mass. 1963, esp. pp. 129-145. During the Reformation it was a subject of polemic, e.g. *WA*, vol. 1, p. 354." As cited in: John W. O'Malley, *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986) 26f.

that a theology that supported the merit of "good works" allowed for the actual commodification of the merit of God's favor as a proxy for grace (since grace itself was a gift from God and could not be sold). This was the logic that led to the infamous sale of indulgences, since the money for which an indulgence was sold represented a sacrifice of previous effort for the good on the part of the penitent, who purchased merit (worthiness) of God's gift of grace through the sacraments, which the Church controlled.[61]

Returning to our main argument, it is clear that from Aquinas' *De Potentia* that he held that acquiring grace through the sacraments both secures salvation and facilitates/authorizes licit (i.e. "religious" as opposed to "magical") demon compulsion. The "purity" that justifies/sanctifies the soul (i.e. ensures salvation) also serves as God's authorization, describing the *condition of the performer* (conditional investiture with his divine authority) within the familiar Solomonic paradigm. Luther's theological intervention into the nature of grace thus attacked the Scholastic (Thoman) model of the acquisition of grace (necessary for justification/salvation) as mediated through the Church's sacraments by means of merit (i.e. "good works," including the purchase of indulgences). Luther's model supplants the Thoman one by positing the acquisition of grace (also necessary for justification/salvation) "through faith."

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[61] In Aquinas (*ST*, Suppl. IIIae, Q 25 [Indulgences], A 1), we find the basic theological underpinning of the idea of the 'treasury of merit': "Now one man can satisfy for another, as we have explained above (Supplement:13:2). And the saints in whom this super-abundance of satisfactions is found, did not perform their good works for this or that particular person, who needs the remission of his punishment (else he would have received this remission without any indulgence at all), but they performed them for the whole Church in general, even as the Apostle declares that he fills up 'those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ ... for His body, which is the Church' to whom he wrote (Colossians 1:24). These merits, then, are the common property of the whole Church. Now those things which are the common property of a number are distributed to the various individuals according to the judgment of him who rules them all. Hence, just as one man would obtain the remission of his punishment if another were to satisfy for him, so would he too if another's satisfactions be applied to him by one who has the power to do so."

Here, I am extending a logic explicitly that both Aquinas and Luther extend only implicitly, given that the accompanying authority to compel demons is only their secondary concern. (The same would not have been the case for contemporaneous magicians, and it is the magicians and exorcists.) Yet thanks to Aquinas, the means by which a soul acquired grace had come to be understood as the same means by which one achieved the requisite *condition of the performer* for the licit compulsion of demons. As such, Luther's redefinition of how grace is acquired also redefined the necessary steps (i.e. ritual) for achieving the requisite *condition of the performer*. Thus, Luther's own descriptions of encounters with the devil, who may be "conquered/vanquished" through faith, reflect his awareness of and continued reliance on Aquinas' instrumentalization of the apocryphal Solomon narrative.

Luther's redefinition of the nature of grace, however, was not without ripple effects. Aquinas had solved the problem of selectively deauthorizing illicit demon compulsion as magic by controlling the flow of that grace which (primarily) achieved salvation and (secondarily) facilitated and authorized licit (i.e. "religious") demon compulsion. Luther, by undermining the grace economy in his effort to end such abuses as the sale of indulgences, had inadvertently reopened the compulsion of demons *by the authority of God* to anyone who had "faith," and through that faith, the requisite *condition of the performer*: justifying (or sanctifying) grace (i.e. salvation). Faith was the condition through which an individual became part of God's authority, and so, in this redefinition, Luther also disrupted the previous certainty of having received grace that followed from participation in sacramental ritual.

Within the Scholastic paradigm, the acquisition of that grace that both justifies the soul and authorizes it for the compulsion of demons had been insured through participation in the sacraments as reliable conduits of that grace (i.e. performance of "purity" ritual). A magician or exorcist could thus "know" he was authorized for demon compulsion (i.e. had achieved the requisite *condition of the performer*) because he had ritually enacted the acquisition of grace-as-purity.[62] The Lutheran, however, even believing that he is authorized *if he has faith*, cannot have the same confidence in the ultimate status of his authorization/"purity" (i.e. *condition of the performer*) to compel demons for the same reason that he cannot know the status of his salvation – that status is completely internal and thus has no external proof. For how could he be sure that he had in fact acquired grace?

It is on this observation that we suggest understanding the performance of acts of faith as ritual acts in Luther's (and later Lutheran) discourse. In this we include not only Luther's own infamous battles with the devil, but also later early modern examples of ritual magic to be discussed in the conclusion to the present project. There, we also suggest that the performance of such acts/tests of faith be read as a ritual means for acquiring and maintaining the faith-as-purity necessary not only for salvation, but also for demon compulsion itself. By extension, this allows us to speculate as to the nature of certain early modern manuals of demon compulsion as (unorthodox) Protestant rituals intended – at least in part – as indirect evidence or assurance of salvation (i.e.

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[62] This also appears to be the point of departure for illicit demon compulsion. Magician authors of medieval grimoires tend to accept the sacramental ideas about grace-as-purity and selectively disregard the prohibitions against the practice of magic.

justification). Their textual logic relies on the conclusions made to this point. Since salvation is not directly knowable within a theology of predestination, while the same grace that secures salvation also authorizes demon compulsion, then one may indirectly know that sanctifying grace is present (i.e. that one is "*in statu salutis*" or justified) upon the "successful" completion of a demon compelling ritual. In other words, if one survives an encounter (whether framed as compulsion, restraint, or "overcoming") with a demon or the devil, then one must necessarily be justified ("saved") since that justification is an understood necessary precondition for surviving such an encounter. Survival of a diabolical or demonic encounter is *ex post facto* proof of justification and, because it is unknowable beforehand, the choice to "believe" that one is justified (and will thus emerge victorious) may be understood as a ritual performance of faith.

Ultimately, Luther cast the practice of "magic" not as individual sins of idolatry ("bad works," as it were), but rather in two different ways: first, in his *Small Catechism* (1529), as sins of blasphemy, and then, in his *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543), as outward signs of an internal state of total apostasy (in other words, "bad faith"). For Luther "grace" is not merited (as a result of good works or "faith"), but rather given freely by God through faith. In consequence, "grace" and "faith" become causally indistinguishable in Luther's theology.

Let us now return to the main course of the chapter.

Works and Merit – The Theological Impasse in Luther's Anti-Magic Argument: From Aquinas' *De Potentia* to Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*

As we will see, the core of the formulation of Aquinas' Scholastic anti-magic theological argument remained essentially unchanged throughout the sixteenth century – throughout witch trials, the popularization and even publication of texts of ritual magic,[63] the Christianization of the Kabbalah, and widespread interest in alchemy. Scholastic theologians (or those in dialogue with them) sought to forbid or permit all of these practices arguing either for the presence or absence of Aquinas' explicit or implicit demonic pacts.[64] However, as just argued, this Scholastic strategy was incompatible with emerging Lutheran (and post-Lutheran Protestant) theology. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone (*iustificatio sola fide*) precluded his use of Aquinas' anti-magic argument because Luther's teaching denied the spiritual merit of "good works" upon which Aquinas' anti-magic argument in *De Potentia* depended. These assertions find ample support throughout Luther's writings (in his *On the Freedom of a Christian* (1520), *On the Bondage of the Will* (1525), etc.). Throughout his career as a reformer, Luther had argued that good works have no sanctifying merit, going so far as to insist that without faith, any work – no matter how good – was a damnable sin.[65] Luther repeats this claim again and again.

The reason that Aquinas' anti-magic solution was unavailable to Luther was that

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[63] The *De Occulta Philosophia Libri Tres* (1531) of Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim is certainly the most famous example.

[64] The Jesuit demonologist, Martin Delrio, is still arguing against magic in terms demonic pacts in his *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex*, which was published in three volumes between 1599 and 1601. See: See Libri II, Quaestio III in Martín A Delrío, Gérard Rivius, and Ernst, *Disquisitionum Magicarum Libri Sex, in Tres Tomos Partiti. Auctore Martino Del Rio, Societatis Jesu Presbytero* (Lovanii, ex officina Gerardi Rivii. Anno M.D.)

[65] Oberman notes: "There is ...good reason to believe that Luther at the end of 1509 has become independent of the nominalistic tradition as regards the relation of faith and reason while retaining till 1515-16 the doctrine of the *facere quod in se est* in its application to the relation of will and grace." See: Heiko A. Oberman "Facientibus quod in se est Deus non denegat gratiam: Robert Holcot, O.P. and the Beginnings of Luther's Theology," *Harvard Theological Review*, 55.4 (1962): 317-342, here 333.

Aquinas had both allowed for the real physical effects of "magic" and concluded that these effects were affected by demons that intervened into physical reality in exchange for the magician's worship of them, which is to say, idolatry. For Aquinas, the effects of magic served as evidence of the commission of the sin of idolatry, in a logic of *corpus delicti*, requiring physical or visible evidence of the sin.[66] According to Aquinas, the sin of idolatry consists of the fact that *latria* – the service and veneration properly due only to God – is rendered to idols rather than to God, thus idolatry (*idol+latria*).[67] In Aquinas' model, *latria* is effectively a "good work" which merits spiritual reward – God's favor.[68] Thus, its perversion (i.e. *idolatria*) is a sin of "works." In consequence, Luther could not rely on the sin of idolatry to anchor the anti-magic theology of his *Small Catechism* and *Vom Schemhamphoras* in the way that Aquinas had in his *De Potentia* and *Summa*. Had he followed Aquinas' definition of *latria*, he would have (at least indirectly) contradicted

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[66] The phrase *corpus delicti* refers to the substantial and fundamental fact necessary to prove the commission of a crime, such as a corpse, in the case of murder.

[67] For more detail, see the discussion in the previous chapter.

[68] Such merit, however, is not possible without grace. In Roman theology, this merit is possible because of *gratia gratis data* (grace gratuitously given), the existence of which Luther denied. See above quote from *Summa Contra Gentiles*. See Aquinas, *ST II-I*, Q 114, A 1, resp.: "I answer that, Merit and reward refer to the same, for a reward means something given anyone in return for work or toil, as a price for it. Hence, as it is an act of justice to give a just price for anything received from another, so also is it an act of justice to make a return for work or toil. Now justice is a kind of equality, as is clear from the Philosopher (Ethic. v, 3), and hence justice is simply between those that are simply equal; but where there is no absolute equality between them, neither is there absolute justice, but there may be a certain manner of justice, as when we speak of a father's or a master's right (Ethic. v, 6), as the Philosopher says. And hence where there is justice simply, there is the character of merit and reward simply. But where there is no simple right, but only relative, there is no character of merit simply, but only relatively, in so far as the character of justice is found there, since the child merits something from his father and the slave from his lord. Now it is clear that between God and man there is the greatest inequality: for they are infinitely apart, and all man's good is from God. Hence there can be no justice of absolute equality between man and God, but only of a certain proportion, inasmuch as both operate after their own manner. Now the manner and measure of human virtue is in man from God. Hence man's merit with God only exists on the presupposition of the Divine ordination, so that man obtains from God, as a reward of his operation, what God gave him the power of operation for, even as natural things by their proper movements and operations obtain that to which they were ordained by God; differently, indeed, since the rational creature moves itself to act by its free-will, hence its action has the character of merit, which is not so in other creatures."

his own teachings concerning the meaninglessness of "good works" and thus effectively conceded the validity of the sale of indulgences, etc.

This is the fundamental difference that completes the Protestant "faith" turn in the Christian discourse on Solomon, "purity," and demon compulsion in the magic/anti-magic debate. Unlike the Scholastics, Luther did not initially build his arguments against "magic" (the magical invocation of the name of God) on the negative example of Solomon's idolatry. However, neither did he define magic as demonic intervention elicited through explicit or implicit demonic pact. Because of the nature of Luther's own theological position concerning works and merit in relation to justification and grace, he could not.

For Luther, the underlying sin of "magic" thus could not be located in the act itself. For that reason, he locates it in the inward state of unbelief in the sovereignty of God (i.e. bad "faith") from which it is possible for such "blasphemous" acts to follow. Consequently, in Luther's Protestant theology, the sin of magic is no longer necessarily connected to the *practice* of magic (i.e. "works"), not only the sin of idolatry, and the figure of Solomon (as the archetypal idolater) and the demonic pact are no longer crucial elements of the initial anti-magic argument. Luther's changes to the framing of the sin of magic had rendered the figure of Solomon ill suited to his anti-magic theology. Nevertheless, as we have shown, Luther continues to rely on the Solomonic paradigm, if not the narrative, in his adaptation of Aquinas' two-theory model. Luther ultimately returns to it (as paradigm) in his *Vom Schemhamphoras* in which he describes the

invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* as idolatry, and extends Solomon's paradigmatic transgression to all of Jewry.

Vom Schemhamphoras thus becomes a critical document for his theological logic, not (just) for the cultural history of anti-Semitism. Unlike the Scholastics and the early apologists before them, Luther does not single out Solomon specifically as the archetypal idolater for his explanation of the sin of magic. Instead, he condemns all of Jewry for refusing to recognize Jesus as the Messiah and equates their adherence to the Old Testament Law (i.e. the "good works" prescribed by the Law) with idolatry (i.e. service and worship due properly to only to God, now in the person of Jesus). In Luther's theology, then, idolatry has become indistinguishable from apostasy because of his teachings on the meaninglessness of "works" without faith.

For Luther, because the Jews do not have faith in salvation through Jesus, but rather, through adherence to the Law (i.e. "works"), they are idolaters. Thus, in his new anti-magic argument, Luther changes Aquinas' formulation of the paradigmatic sin from idolatry to the related sin of apostasy and the paradigmatic sinner from Solomon (as idolater) to all of Jewry (as apostates). Luther thus has both affirmed the narrative tradition association with demon compelling and reread it by redefining the sin lying at its heart as apostasy.[69] This shift from idolatry to apostasy is an inevitable consequence of Luther's own theological innovations (as we have explained). In doing so, he also reflected the slippage of "magic" from being associated with Solomon in particular to

[69] The polemical strategy of casting Jews as a sort of Christian apostate (i.e. as refusing to accept the fulfillment of their own prophecies) has a history that began long before Luther. For more on this history, see Chazan's discussion of Peter the Venerable (12-16).

Jews in general that had already been observable during the later Middle Ages (as Trachtenberg has noted).

As a result of his doctrine of justification by faith alone, Luther's theology rendered indistinguishable certain previously distinct sins, particularly the related sins of idolatry and apostasy. By way of analogy, one may understand the offense against God committed in the sin of idolatry as being parallel to the crime of sedition committed against a crown or a state. Both of these examples represent conduct or service (i.e. "works") done in breach of due fealty, but not necessarily representing the total and final renunciation of that fealty – which is to say, treason.[70] By denying the spiritual merit of works independent of "faith," however, Luther effectively removes the possibility for seditious acts to be identified separately from a completely treasonous heart and mind – what Catholic theology has in two domains (works and mental disposition), Luther has

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[70] Luther himself uses this metaphor (i.e. "idolatry = treason") in Babylonian captivity where he accuses "popish flatters" of " treason against the gospel." See also: Martin Luther, Erik H. Herrmann, and Paul W. Robinson *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church, 1520* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016) 26. Elsewhere, in *Tischreden* (DLXXXI), Luther connects witchcraft with idolatry (in line with Aquinas' demonology in *De Potentia*) and idolatry with heresy (in line with the Witch Bull, *Desiderantes affectibus*, of 1484). However, in his own discussion, Luther then makes the connection between witchcraft and treason explicit in order to justify his call for the execution of witches: "August 25, 1538, the conversation fell upon witches who spoil milk, eggs, and butter in farm-yards. Dr. Luther said: "I should have no compassion on these witches; I would burn all of them. [...] Our ordinary sins offend and anger God. What, then, must be his wrath against witchcraft, which we may justly designate high treason against the divine majesty, a revolt against the infinite power of God. The jurisconsults who have so learnedly and pertinently treated of rebellion, affirm that the subject who rebels against the sovereign, is worthy of death. Does not witchcraft, then, merit death, which is a revolt of the creature against the Creator, a denial to God of the authority it accords to the demon?" The English translation is taken from: Martin Luther and William Hazlitt, *The Table Talk or Familiar Discourse of Martin Luther* (London: D. Bogue, 1848) 252. Finally, in Luther's *Commentary on The Letter of Paul to the Galatians*, chapter 5, vs. 19 & 20, he writes: This sin [witchcraft] was very common before the light of the Gospel appeared. When I was a child there were many witches and sorcerers around who 'bewitched' cattle, and people, particularly children, and did much harm. But now that the Gospel is here you do not hear so much about it because the Gospel drives the devil away. Now he bewitches people in a worse way with spiritual sorcery. *Witchcraft is a brand of idolatry*. As witches used to bewitch cattle and men, so idolaters, i.e., all the self-righteous, go around to bewitch God and to make Him out as one who justifies men not by grace through faith in Christ but by the works of men's own choosing. They bewitch and deceive themselves. If they continue in their wicked thoughts of God they will die in their idolatry." For further discussion of Luther's construction of witchcraft as treason in Sigrid Brauner and Robert H. Brown, *Fearless Wives and Frightened Shrews: The Construction of the Witch in Early Modern Germany* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001) 53-58.

collapsed into one. For Luther, acts (i.e. "works") in themselves are not discrete entities, but rather follow from faith, and as such are only symptoms of belief.[71] His theology thus does not allow for the possibility of *doing* bad while *being* essentially good. As a result, for Luther, idolatry cannot be merely a seditious act. On the contrary, it can only be an outward sign of inward spiritual treason, in other words, apostasy – the total renunciation of faith. Thus, in Luther's theological paradigm, Solomon's sin of idolatry as described in 1 Kings 11 and as instrumentalized in Aquinas' *De Potentia* is indistinguishable from the related sin of apostasy – the total renunciation of God or "bad faith."

This, the reader will recall, we have previously identified as the analogue to Aquinas' anti-magic strategy in *De Potentia*, which would be necessary in order for Luther to implicate a sin other than blasphemy into the act of magic (i.e. magically invoking the name of God) in a religion defined by faith alone. Yet even so, Luther does not directly instrumentalize the example of Solomon in his *Vom Schemhamphoras*. On the one hand, it is possible that Luther's reason was a desire not to build his anti-magic argument on a trope so demonstrative of the difference between Scholastic definitions of idolatry and his own (i.e. apocryphal Solomon narrative). On the other, by convicting all of Jewry of Solomon's paradigmatic sin (i.e. idolatry, indistinguishable from apostasy), Luther is able to combine his anti-magic theology with his particularly vitriolic late-in-

[71] For Luther, acts (i.e. "works") in themselves are not discrete entities, but rather follow from faith, and as such are only symptoms of belief. In *On the Freedom of a Christian*, Article 23, he writes: "Thus these two sayings are true: 'Good pious works never make a good pious man, but a good pious man does good pious works. Evil works never make an evil man, but an evil man does evil works.' Therefore, the person must always be good an pious first, before all of his good works, and good works follow and proceed from the pious, good person" (Helfferich, 33f.)

life anti-Jewish polemics.[72] It is worth mentioning that Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* was written as a sequel to *Von den Juden und Ihren Lügen* (*On the Jews and Their Lies*, also 1543) and has been regarded by scholars and even Luther's contemporaries as demonstrably more anti-Semitic than its prequel.[73]

That it took even Luther a while to reach a distinct position on this theological issue cannot be doubted. The fact that idolatry and apostasy are ultimately not logically distinguishable in the light of Luther's teachings on the merit of "works" does not mean that he refrains from using the term in other contexts. While he does seem to admonish against most sins as some form of blasphemy, he does not altogether avoid discussion of idolatry.[74] A few such examples can be found his *Tischreden* (*Table Talk*), which was compiled from notes taken by his students over the course of the years between 1531 and 1544 and published after his death in 1566. The students' notes are grouped by theme into sections, and one of those themes is idolatry.

In Luther's *Tischreden*, it is immediately apparent that his interest in the subject of idolatry does not concern the worship of pagan gods or even demons under the guise of pagan gods (as previous theologians beginning with Justin Martyr had explained it).

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[72] For a good orientation to the anti-Semitism of Luther's later writings, see Mark U. Edwards, *Luther's Last Battles: A Study of the Polemics of the Older Luther, 1531-1546*. Ithaca [N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983) especially chapter 6, "Against the Jews." Regarding Luther's later polemics more broadly, Mark Edwards writes, "[S]ome of the later polemics were so violent and vulgar that they offended contemporaries and remain offensive to this day. In the last five or six years of his life, for example, Luther published violent attacks on Catholics, Turks, Jews, and other Protestants. By far the most notorious of these polemics are his attacks on the Jews, especially his *On the Jews and Their Lies* and his *On the Ineffable Name and On Christ's Lineage* (*Vom Schemhamphoras und Vom Geschlecht Christi*), both of 1543" (3).

[73] Edwards also offers helpful discussion of the contemporaneous and later reception of *Vom Schemhamphoras* (135).

[74] For some discussion of Aquinas extension of the sin of idolatry to include all forms of superstition and the implications of this move in his theology, see, for example: Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae: A Guide and Commentary* (Oxford [GB: Oxford University Press, 2014) 162-164.

Rather, Luther effectively redefines the sin of idolatry in order to deploy it in his polemics against "works." The following is from his *Tischreden*, "Of Idolatry," CLXXI:

> Idolatry is all manner of seeming holiness and worshipping, let these counterfeit spiritualities shine outwardly as glorious and fair as they may; in a word, all manner of devotion in those that we would serve God without Christ the Mediator, his Word and command. […] All manner of religion, where people serve God without his Word and command, is simple idolatry, and the more holy and spiritual such a religion seems, the more hurtful and venomous it is; for it leads people away from the faith of Christ, and makes them rely upon their own strength, works, and righteousness.[75]

Likewise, in CLXXII, he writes:

> But if a man take in hand a work or a service, out of his own devotion, as he thinks good, thereby to appease God's anger, or to obtain forgiveness of sins, everlasting life, and salvation as is the manner of all hypocrites and seeming holy workers, then, I say flatly, he honors and worships an idol in heart; and it helps him nothing at all, that he thinks he does it to the honor of the true God; for that which is not faith is sin.[76]

Thus, two things are clear. First, Luther is not talking about the service of idols (*Götzendienst*) in the literal sense, as Aquinas had done, but is once again issuing invectives against "good works" and merit. Second, Luther has clearly placed idolatry (defined as works) in diametric opposition to faith alone since he believes that any service that God has not commanded is idolatry.[77]

This definition of idolatry as any service to God that God has not commanded rather than as service to false gods (i.e. idols) allows Luther to revise his anti-magic theology into its full and final articulation in *Vom Schemhamphoras*. As we will see, Luther in fact references the distinction between service God has commanded and not

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[75] See: Martin Luther and William Hazlitt. *The Table Talk of Martin Luther* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881) 68f.
[76] Luther and Hazlitt 70.
[77] See: *Tischreden*, CLXXVII in Luther and Hazlitt, 72.

commanded in *Vom Schemhamphoras* as an apologia for the apparent self-contradiction, given his teaching of the importance of baptism. His distinction is first and foremost strategic. First, it allows him to make Jews into idolaters for refusing to recognize the divinity of Jesus and for continuing to keep the "Old Law" (service which, according to Luther, God *no longer* commands). As a consequence, it also allows him to cast any Christian who believes in the validity of Jewish "works" (e.g. the "magical" invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*) as a Jew, and thus, an idolater. In his *Vom Schemhamphoras*, as we will see, this is exactly what he does.

Vom Schemhamphoras: Where Theology Converges with History

Luther published his brief tract, *Vom Schemhamphoras* (usually translated as *On the Ineffable Name*), as a sequel to *On the Jews and Their Lies* in 1543, three years before his death. It is the second of the three of his so-called *Judenschriften* ("writings on Jews") written during that year and was published together with the third, *Vom Geschlecht Christi* (usually translated as "*The Generations of Christ*" or "*Of the Lineage of Christ*"). The publishing history of Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*, which included seven reprints,[78] indicates significant early interest in the work – an interest that has puzzled modern scholars, who have had little to say about the text. Yet despite the early interest, alone among Luther's polemics, it was never translated from German into Latin. Justus

[78] Of the four later *Judenschriften*, *Vom Schemhamphoras* "was reprinted most, with seven German editions, five published in Wittenberg and two in Frankfurt. It is unclear why this treatise should have been the one most reprinted of the four later treatises; perhaps its sensational first half, recounting Porchetus's tale of Christ the magician, appealed to the curious. *On the Last Words of David* saw only two printings, while *Against the Sabbatarians* and *On the Jews and Their Lies* saw three printings each." See: Edwards 136.

Jonas, who translated the much longer prequel, *On the Jews and Their Lies*, declined the task of translating *Vom Schemhamphoras*, citing as his reason, "*non est facile transferes in Latinum*."[79]

Even among Luther's colleagues and supporters, reaction to the text appears to have been one of disgust. The scatological polemics and vitriolic anti-Semitism in Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* – eclipsing even that of *On the Jews and Their Lies* – were too much for Luther's fellow Protestant theologians.[80] What is more, the initial inclination of Luther's movement to distance itself from this particular work appears to have continued. For example, *Vom Schemhamphoras* is absent from the 1971 Concordia Press English language publication, *The Collected Works of Martin Luther*.[81] And, while the *Vom Schemhamphoras* is included in the 1920 Bohlaus Edition,[82] the critical commentary to the text is uncharacteristically anonymous.[83] Astonishingly, it was not until 1992 that a complete English translation became available when Gerhard Falk published his book, *The Jew in Christian Theology*.

Perhaps as a result of a combination of the unavailability of a translation and the *de facto* taboo status of the text, Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* has received comparatively little attention from modern scholars. What attention it has received is seldom more than a passing mention of its relationship as sequel to the better-known *On the Jews and Their Lies*, thus including it among Luther's *Judenschriften*. When scholars

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[79] "It is not easy to translate into Latin."
[80] Edwards 135.
[81] Gerhard Falk, *The Jew in Christian Theology: Martin Luther's "Vom Schem Hamphoras", Previously Unpublished in English, and Other Milestones in Church Doctrine Concerning Judaism* (McFarland & Co., U.S, 1992) 164.
[82] Editorial work on the Weimarer Ausgabe began in 1883, and was completed in 2009.
[83] Falk 164.

do offer some analysis, with few exceptions, they tend to take the text for nothing more than an anti-Semitic tirade or, at most, an anti- Jewish Kabbalah polemic. It is no doubt due to the absence of a Scholastic demonology (including, potentially, some reference to the figure of Solomon) in Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* that scholars have largely failed to recognize it as an articulation of his anti-magic theology. Yet, as we have explained, Luther's anti-magic theology does not depend upon the figure of the demon.

To the best of our knowledge, only Franz Posset has correctly identified the text as anti- Christian Cabala.[84] None, however, seem to have connected Luther's prohibition of the "magical" invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* with both Renaissance Christian Cabala and medieval *nigromantia*, nor does there appear to be any scholarly comparison of the articulation of Luther's anti-magic argumentation in the *Vom Schemhamphoras* with the earlier and much simpler articulation in his *Small Catechism*.

Scholars consistently regard Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* as one of his *Judenschriften*, as we have said, but our reading of the text potentially complicates that taxonomy. While there is no question that, in *Vom Schemhamphoras*, Luther writes – or claims to write – about the Jews, Luther himself is quite clear in the opening of the text that it was written not for the sake of Jews, but rather, for the sakes of Christians who "want to become Jews." More to the point, however, our analysis of *Vom Schemhamphoras* will show that, in addition to his instrumentalization of the Jews as paradigmatic idolaters (as Aquinas used Solomon), Luther in fact uses the Jews in a manner analogous to Aquinas' use of demons in order to solve to solve the *corpus dilecti*

[84] Posset writes, "In 1543 Luther published his somewhat anti-Reuchlin book *Of the Unknowable God and the Genealogy of Christ* (*Vom Schem Hamphoras*), i.e., about the ineffable *Tetragrammaton*" (708).

problem of his earlier anti-magic theological prohibition. In other words, we argue that Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* need not necessarily be read as one of his *Judenschriften* (in the strictest sense) because Jews fulfill the same function in Luther's text as demons do in Aquinas' anti-magic theology – the Jews in Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* are not Jews, but demons. In *Vom Schemhamphoras*, Luther functionally demonizes the Jews as evidence of the commission of the sin of idolatry (i.e. *corpus delicti*) to the extent that the text may be read as Luther's demonology.

Turning now to the text itself, it is straightforward to examine how *Vom Schemhamphoras*' rhetorical structure retreats from Luther's initial prohibition against magic as blasphemy and asserts a model very much akin to Aquinas demonological (and Solomonic) prohibition of magic as idolatry. At the opening of the text, we read:

> 1. In the last pamphlet [*Of the Jews and Their Lies*] I have announced that I will henceforth ignore what the ferocious, miserable Jews lie about their Shem Hamphoras as described by Purchetus [sic.] in his book called *Victoria*.[85]
>
> This I have done herewith, in honor of our belief, and in opposition to the devilish lies of the Jews so that those who want to become Jews will see what kind of "fine" dogmas they must believe and keep among the Jews.
>
> For as I plainly stipulated in that pamphlet, it is not my opinion that I can write against the Jews in the hope of converting them. That is why I did not call that pamphlet *Against the Jews*, but *Against the Jews and Their Lies*, so that we Germans may know from historical evidence what a Jew is so that we can warn our Christians against them as we warn against the Devil himself in order to strengthen and honor our belief; not to convert the Jews which is about as possible as converting the Devil.[86]

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[85] *Victoria Porcheti adversos impios Hebraeos*, written c. 1303 by the Genoese Carthusian monk, Porchetus, died c. 1315. The full original title is: *Victoria Porcheti aduersus impios Hebręos, in qua tum ex sacris literis, tum ex dictis Talmud, ac Caballistarum, et aliorum omnium authorum, quos Hebręi recipiunt, monstratur veritas catholicę fidei*. *("Victory of Porchetus against the unbelieving Jews, wherein partly from the holy scriptures and partly from the words of the Talmud and of the Kabbalists and all the other authors who are influential among the Jews, the truth of the Catholic religion is shown.")*

[86] Falk 166.

The possibility of sixteenth century German Christians literally converting to Judaism on any scale that would have interested Luther seems highly unlikely. It is far more likely that Luther's reference to "those who would become Jews" was intended as a polemic against something he considered "Judaizing" – Christian Cabalistic interest in the *Shem ha-Mephorash* and the medieval magical practices of demon compulsion, which the Christianization of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* threatened to legitimize. By this late point in Luther's life, there can be no question that the connection between the *Shem ha-Mephorash* in the Christian Cabala and medieval *nigromantia* was clear to him. The reason for this is that the "*Victoria of Purchetus*" that Luther references included Raymundus Martín's translation of the satirical and polemical Jewish anti-Christian tract, *Toledot Yeshu*, and had been printed for the first time in 1520.

The reader will recall that Luther's own theology, which defines justification (salvation) solely in terms of "faith" (i.e. belief), presented him with unique challenges in policing religious orthopraxy, and, furthermore, that he treats actions, not as discreet entities, but as symptoms of belief. It is the combination of these conditions that informs our reading of rhetorical structure of Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*. For Luther, a Christian who does what Jews do or who believes what Jews believe, is not a Christian, but rather a Jew. Again, in Luther's theological paradigm, action is only an outward sign of an inward state. It therefore must follow that someone acting like a Jew *is* as Jew. Thus, if Luther can establish that belief in the "magical" qualities of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* is "Jewish," it follows that a Christian who is interested in the "magical" qualities of *Shem ha-Mephorash* "wants to become a Jew," and that one who invokes it

already has. This stroke solves the *corpus dilecti* problem of his earlier anti-magic strategy (i.e. classifying *Shem ha-Mephorash* as blasphemy). With his new solution, Luther does not need to concede the efficacy of a magical act as evidence of an idolatrous demonic pact because, by making all Jews idolaters and unsavable, he can now convict Christians of apostasy to an idolatrous religion whenever they express interest in "magic" (i.e. the *Shem ha-Mephorash*).

To make that fate completely unacceptable to the Christian, Luther then proceeds to paint Judaism in the most disgusting terms he can muster – not unlike repulsive portrayals of demons in Scholastic demonologies. Effectively, Luther is saying, "To believe in the efficacy of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* is to become that" (i.e. Luther's singularly repugnant portrait of Jews). This, we suggest, is what Luther meant in the opening of *Vom Schemhamphoras,* when he writes, "This I have done herewith, in honor of our belief, and in opposition to the devilish lies of the Jews so that those who want to become Jews will see what kind of 'fine' dogmas they must believe and keep among the Jews."[87]

The rhetorical structure of *Vom Schemhamphoras* follows this simple logic. Already in the first sentences of the introduction, Luther begins casting the Jews as apostates ("so that we Germans may know from historical evidence what a Jew is so that we can warn our Christians against them as we warn against the Devil himself"). He continues, underscoring the permanence of what he casts as the Jewish defection from God:

[87] Falk 167.

> A Jew or a Jewish heart is as hard as stone and iron and cannot be moved by any means. Even if Moses and all he Prophets came and did their wondrous works in front of their eyes as did Christ and his apostles, so that they would have to quit their unreason, it would still be useless.
> Even if they were punished in the most gruesome manner that the streets ran with blood, that their dead would not be counted, not in the hundreds of thousands but in the millions, […] still they must insist on being right even if after these 1,500 years they were in misery another 1,500 years. Still God must be a liar and they must be correct.[88]

Rhetorically, what Luther establishes with the above quote is equivalent to the fall of the angels (i.e. the creation of demons). He paints the Jews in the familiar tones of medieval demonology: proud, fallen, and unsavable. While it is true that one can find similar depictions of Jews in other Christian theological texts (both earlier and contemporaneous), Luther's instrumentalization of the Jews as evidence of Christian guilt of the sin of apostasy (*corpus delicti*), used to guarantee his prohibition against the Christian practice of magic, distinguishes Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras*.

Immediately following these early passages, and without introduction, is Luther's translation of the *Toledot Yeshu* in its entirety, drawn from the 1520 publication of Porchetus' *Victoria Porcheti adversos impios Hebraeos*. The strategy for its inclusion is clear: Luther means to show that not only do Jews not believe in the divinity of Christ, but they also mock and ridicule him. This translation thus combines with Luther's reminder – which he treats almost as a refrain – to stress that *this* is what you must belief if you with to become a Jew (i.e. believe in the efficacy of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*). Here again, he wishes to further the mutual exclusivity of Judaism and Christianity.

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[88] Falk 167.

The transition from his translation of the *Toledot Yeshu* to the rest of the text is as abrupt as is the transition from the introduction to the translation. Luther simply follows the translation with an immediate and triumphant, "gotcha!":

> Where are they now, the unfaithful Christians who became Jews or wish to become Jews? Come here for a kiss, the devil has thrown it in the N. and emptied his stomach again, that is truly a holy place for the Jews, and whoever wants to become [a] Jew, must kiss, devour, [guzzle] and pray to and then the devil also [guzzles] and devours which his disciples [i.e. the Jews] and can throw out both from above and below.[89]

"Where are they now?" is an invitation for those who believe in the efficacy of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* to identify themselves, even after he has revealed the "truth" of the Jewish belief in its power. The words with which Luther transitions to the rest of his tract support this reading:

> Now let us take a look, one at a time, at the "fine" dogmas of the Jewish belief as given in this essay, so that anyone who has the inclination to become a Jew will be relieved. If you want to become a true Jew then listen and learn the catechism of the holy Jewish belief, but not in the name of God.[90]

In what follows, Luther proceeds to elaborate not upon his objections to Jewish teaching in general, but everything that he finds wrong with the story of the *Toledot Yeshu* from his Christian perspective in particular. The "fine dogmas" that he discusses are particular to the "magic" of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*.

After several examples of what Luther considers to be either heretical or absurd claims inherent to the story of the *Toledot Yeshu*, he comes to his crucial rhetorical

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[89] Gerhard Falk, *The Jew in Christian Theology: Martin Luther's "Vom Schem Hamphoras", Previously Unpublished in English, and Other Milestones in Church Doctrine Concerning Judaism* (McFarland & Co., U.S, 1992) 171.
[90] Falk 171.

equivocation of the Jewish belief in the power of the ineffable name of God (i.e. the *Shem ha-Mephorash*) with the belief in false gods, in other words, idolatry:

> Indeed those are holy children of God who placed [as] many gods over their own God as there are letters in the Shem Hamphoras. It is said that there are 216 of them as will follow; that is, they pray to 216 thousand devils and not the right God whom they insult [thus] and whose divine honor they steal with the Shem Hamphoras; they are the same ones who appropriate the miserable letter.[91]

Luther thus makes Jews into idolaters in their "worship" of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. He continues:

> Oh, how the mad Jews had it coming! they did no want to accept Jesus of Nazareth as savior and son of God so that they could have remained with the only righteous God as we Christians have remained. For it is impossible that he who accepts the right belief and Jesus Christ as Messiah should or could accept more than one, right an unified God for he must, as the devil wants, accept strange and several more Gods even if it is only naked, dead, worthless letters or Shem Hamphoras, that is, big bags full of piled-up devils. Yes, such Gods the Jews wanted to have instead of the right God, Jesus of Nazareth.[92]

With that, the rhetorical chain is complete. Christians who believe in the *Shem ha-Mephorash* are Jews because they embrace "fine" Jewish beliefs, and Jews function both as idolaters (Solomon) worshipping as many devils as there are letters in the *Shem ha-Mephorash*, and as the demons themselves in that association with them is "proof" of guilt (*corpus delicti*). Thus, the *Shem ha-Mephorash* itself takes the place of the efficacy of the magical act in Aquinas' model providing *post facto* evidence (*corpus delicti*) of the idolatrous pact. Its presence in a Christian text or ritual becomes evidence of guilt of the sin of idolatry/apostasy. Therefore, Christians who believe in the *Shem ha-Mephorash* are, like Jews, idolaters who worship devils rather than the true God.

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[91] Falk 171.
[92] Falk 176.

Luther's final rhetorical move is to leave no doubts about the invalidity (i.e. inefficacy) of the "magic" of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. Most of the remainder of the text consists of explanations and examples intended to ridicule the Kabbalistic technique of *gematria*,[93] a Kabbalistic technique of interpreting the Hebrew scripture by computing the numerical value of words, based on those of their constituent letters. Yet prior to his farcical demonstration of Kabbalistic techniques, Luther inserts an apologia for the apparent similarity of the words spoken during the Christian ritual of baptism with the *Shem ha-Mephorash* and equates Catholic ritual with the "idolatry" of belief in the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. Concerning baptism, he writes, "[B]oth water and letters are in baptism (not otherwise) full and rich in God's grace and power, because he has promised and revealed it, he himself will do it."[94]

Still, for Luther, the words of baptism are fundamentally different from the magical invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* because God has commanded baptism. For this reason, he implicates and "rejects the Pope together with his whole church, for he filled the whole world with similar tricks, magic, idol worship for he too has his particular Shem Hamphoras […]" Luther similarly equates the prayers used for the blessing of holy water and candles with the "void and empty letters" of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* and the pope with an "arch trickster, magician, and idol worshipper." He continues:

> So [the pope] conjured caps and plates and all the world with mere words or letters, so that they become monks who, nuns, priests, who hold mass and sell,

[93] For Luther's satirical description of gematria, see: Falk 178-180.
[94] Falk 171.

> call upon and celebrate saints, cash in indulgences, pray to corpses, serve the Devil, and earn heaven through their own works, that is, that heaven in which the Devil is bishop and pope. [Hell][95]

Once again, Luther equates "good works" with idolatry and idolatry with apostasy.

Interesting, however, is the full and final iteration of his anti-magic theology, in which Luther also manages to blur the distinction between idolatry and blasphemy (i.e. between the First and Second Commandments). Here, the pope's idolatrous (apostate) need for good works and his invocation of God's name is made even worse because not only did God not command such use of his name, but he in fact specifically forbade such abuse of his name. Luther punctuates his condemnation by quoting the Second Commandment, "You shall not misuse God's name." In an interesting twist, even though Luther has carefully avoided Scholastic demonology and solved his *corpus dilecti* problem, not only does he seem uncertain as to whether the "magical" invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash* is idolatry (apostasy) or blasphemy, he also seems unwilling to absolutely commit to its inefficacy:

> If however, something does occur because of [the *Shem ha-Mephorash*], it is not the work of God but of the Devil, so as to strengthen his lies and tricks (through God's permission) to confuse the unbelievers and to warn them; as we can see witches and other magicians often do great harm.[96]

Luther here tries to implicate both the sin of idolatry and the sin of blasphemy into the invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*, in his suggestion that "witches and magicians often do great harm" (with the permission of God and through the aid of the devil). Yet

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[95] Falk 177.
[96] Falk 177.

this represents an even further concession in the direction of Scholastic demonology, rather than allowing Luther to resolve his own theological impasse.

Conclusion

As we have been tracing it, the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons as well as its theological implications persisted into the sixteenth century, not only in the works of early modern Scholastic demonologists and Renaissance magician-theologians but also in the theology of Protestant reformer, Martin Luther. While the figure of Solomon himself receded from published (though not necessarily manuscript) discourse, the late antique paradigm of the magician/exorcist's conditional investiture with divine authority over supernatural agents as an aspect of God's favor in reward for "purity" continued to shape both the practice of "magic" and the theological struggle to forbid it. The continuity of the narrative – more specifically, its paradigm – provides us with a means of demonstrating the persistence of "purity" as the *condition of the performer* within the Christian discourse of licit (i.e. "religious" as opposed to "magical") demon compulsion.

Informed by Mary Douglas' observations concerning the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" in Jewish sects as they move farther away from the Temple in time and space after its destruction, we have posited a similar spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" within the development of Christianity. By identifying the paradigmatic role of the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons within the Christian discourse of demon compulsion and further identifying "purity" as the

initial (earliest) prescribed *condition of the performer* within that discourse, we have traced the transformation of "purity" from purity as absence-of-defilement in late antiquity to purity as presence-of-grace with Aquinas, and then, with Luther, to purity as presence-of-faith.

An examination of Luther's anti-magic theology reveals his theory of (illicit) magic to be non-demonological (strictly speaking) and – in the end – to represent magic as "invalid" because he ultimately denies the efficacy of the magical invocation of the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. Nonetheless, a separate examination of his accounts of "religious" encounters with the devil/demons does indeed describe a distinct, valid, and licit means of compelling ("overcoming") such malevolent spirits. This two-theory strategy, which Luther adopts – even as he denies validity to one of the theories in *Vom Schemhamphoras* –, we have traced to Aquinas' instrumentalization of the conditional investiture paradigm of the apocryphal Solomon narrative in *De Potentia*. *Vom Schemhamphoras* does indeed provide evidence for Luther's continued reliance on that paradigm as he redefines the requisite *condition of the performer* as presence-of-faith rather than presence-of-grace or absence-of-contamination or defilement.

Moreover, Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* ultimately implicates in his anti-magic theological argument the sin of idolatry (albeit redefined as apostate worship of "works"). In so doing, he takes up an argument which had been previously established as the underlying sin inherent to "magic" (illicit demon compulsion) through Aquinas, who brought the apocryphal Solomon narrative together with the canonical narrative of the king's idolatry in 1 Kings 11. This evidence identifies Luther's stipulation of "faith" as the

requisite *condition of the performer* both for salvation and for "overcoming" the devil as a move analogous to Aquinas' stipulation of grace in *De Potentia* in yet another transformation of "purity."

This realignment of Luther's work suggests many implications beyond the scope of the present project. One such implication would call into question the traditional purity-belief dichotomies used within religious studies more broadly, because, in this case, purity and belief have clearly been placed on a continuity, rather than in contrast. Another set of implications concern the historical evolution I have found here. Quite simply, because Luther's anti-magic theology treats "faith" as the requisite *condition of the performer* in licit (i.e. "religious") demon compulsion in the same way that Aquinas treats "grace" in his own anti-magic argumentation, we must consider the possibility that early modern texts of ritual magic stipulating "faith" as a *condition of the performer* may not be medieval Catholic "survivals," but also unique products of a relatively unexplored "magical" side of the Reformation.

Thus this chapter also suggests that treating the Reformation as a break from Scholastic theology may be shortsighted, if not downright misleading. Here, by establishing a relationship between Aquinas' use of presence-of-grace and Luther's use of presence-of-faith as *condition of the performer*, we have restored part of Luther's theological dialogue with Scholastic demonology in the sixteenth century – making that dialogue central to understanding the Reformation. Luther's *Vom Schemhamphoras* – perhaps the least understood of his so-called *Judenschriften* – has emerged here as the full and final articulation of his unique anti-magic theology Its status as a Protestant

"demonology" analogous to demonologies (Scholastic, etc.) may, thus potentially also account for the text's popularity in the sixteenth century, which has thus far remained surprising to many scholars.[97] In this reading, *Vom Schemhamphoras* also provides scholars with another period source for understanding constructs of "magic" in the sixteenth century in addition to the more thoroughly researched (and usually Catholic) demonologies (e.g. *Malleus Maleficarum* 1486, *Daemonolatreiae libri tres* 1595, *Compendium Maleficarum* 1608, etc.). This, by extension, invites further investigation of what we have claimed represents Luther's functional theological demonization of Jews in *Vom Schemhamphoras*.

Moreover, my argument also sets Luther's work more solidly within its historical context, strongly suggesting that Luther wrote his *Vom Schemhamphoras* in large part in response to the popularity of the *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494) and *De Arte Cabalistica* (1517) of German humanist Johannes Reuchlin. In this sense, the work of the present chapter also sheds further light on both the nature and reception of humanist theology in Reformation Germany, adding to recent work like that of Erika Rummel who has argued against the scholarship that casts Reuchlin as a "proto-Reformer."[98]

Finally, this chapter's comparison of Luther's and Aquinas' constructs of "grace" has identified presence-of-faith as spiritualized and metaphoricized form of "purity" (yet

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[97] For example, Edwards writes, "In contrast to Luther's other writings against the Jews, section one of this treatise is singularly devoid of any edifying theological, exegetical or historical comments. Even by Luther's standards the vulgarity excessive and usually humorless" (133).

[98] See: Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), especially 29, where she writes, "The idea that humanists were either forerunners of or comrades-in-arms with the Reformation was kept alive in both Protestant and Catholic historiography until the middle of the century. In this manner humanism became an issue in the Reformation debate and its champions implicated in questions that were peripheral to the primary mission of the movement, which was cultural."

another redefinition of the *condition of the performer*). This comparison calls for scholarship to acknowledge the performance of acts/tests of faith as a Protestant ritual means for acquiring and maintaining the faith-as-purity necessary for salvation, not just demon compulsion, but also as indirect evidence of salvation. Because in both Aquinas' and Luther's models, the same grace that secures salvation also authorizes demon compulsion, Luther's innovation needs to be considered as initiating modern performative practices of evangelical "spiritual warfare," much like his own battles with the Devil. These accounts, in their way, belong to a tradition of what is effectively a Protestant demonology including not only the Reformation theology of Martin Luther, but also sixteenth century Protestant texts of ritual magic. Luther, as an individual struggling with his faith, enters into a discourse that allies himself with God, and his demon is banished – a rewrite of the underlying narrative material of Solomonic demon compulsion compatible with the new *sole fide* theology, but by no means a break with the traditions traced in the present project.

CONCLUSION

As this project has demonstrated, a consistent Christian discourse of "Solomonic" demon compulsion existed from the first century C.E. through the sixteenth century and beyond. Over this long stretch of time, textual evidence supports the hypothesis of a unified Christian magic/anti-magic discourse, with ritual magic and anti-magic theology emerging as highly constructed categories that served very particular purposes for the theorists who posited them.

What emerged as a theological discourse on "magic" was not initially cast in those terms, but rather, simply in terms of demon compulsion (i.e. in Christian antiquity). The distinction between ritual magic and exorcism arose gradually from an institutional need to deauthorize certain attempts at demon compulsion selectively while continuing to authorize others – that is, to *manage* certain parts of inherited religious knowledge and practice. Following Solomonic demon compulsion though a millennium and a half of transformations has allowed us to argue that, a single discourse, "learned" ritual magic may be best understood as illicit theology. Conversely, of course, religious ritual may just as easily be understood as licit magic. This argument, in turn, supports claims like those

of Richard Kieckhefer, who identified a magical "clerical underground," not only with textual references to clerical practices of illicit magic (as other scholars have demonstrated),[1] but also by virtue of specific theological constructs that inhere in the assumptions of the illicit ("magical") rituals described in the texts.

To understand this unified magic/anti-magic discourse space, I have used the three elements defined by Bronislaw Malinowski as universal to the practice of magic: the *formula*, the *rite*, and the *condition of the performer*. These elements have recurred throughout my exploration of important theological and "magical" texts, and they serve as a tool even when we moved beyond the way Malinowski isolated magic as its own discourse of practice. By turning to the theological assumptions underlying these texts, we have shown here the developments and changes in the construction of "purity" as the requisite *condition of the performer* within Christian discourses of demon compulsion (magic/anti-magic) from late antiquity through the early modern era.

Malinowski's model, extended here to include theology as well as social space, has helped us trace shifts to the conditional nature of authorization to efficacious ritual action, thereby highlighting the potential for how hegemonic definitions of "purity" as *condition of the performer* could emerge as a hegemonic force. Defining "purity" allows an entity or actor to asset the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the "performer's" authorization for the execution of a "magical" act (demon compulsion). Moreover, it allows us to track how anti-magic theology and "learned" magic come to represent competing strategies for

[1] Kieckhefer 153.

authorization within a shared discourse, and how the specific nature of the competition changes across major schisms and shifts within Christianity.

Paying special attention to the figure of Solomon within the magic/anti-magic discourse reveals a spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" akin to that posited by Jacob Neusner and Mary Douglas in Judaism, as its various sects moved farther from the Temple in time and space. Here again, the present project fills in more of the religious landscape of the era they discuss. The discourse of demon compulsion and its reliance on the purity of the performer provided us with a useful constant amid the myriad religious and confessional changes in the development of Christianity.

Comprehending these seemingly disparate theological constructs as a continuum has important implications not only within the Christian discourse(s) of demon compulsion (i.e. exorcism and "magic") but also in Christian theological discourses more broadly. In our study, we have shown this by correlating the changes to the theological constructs of "purity" with major doctrinal and institutional changes within the development of Christianity. Each of the "turns" we have identified is presented as a chapter that documents the evolving definition of "magic" as a theological concept.

Chapter 1 focused on the comparison between the figure of Solomon and the figure of Jesus in early Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics and apologiae. Our investigation of that comparison in the light of Malinowski's model of "magic" confirmed and augmented Ramsey MacMullen's observations about the role of exorcism (i.e. demon compulsion) in the prosthelytic rhetoric (and/or performatives) of early Christianity. In that era, Malinowski's observations about the primacy of the *formula* within the tripartite

structure of "magic" still applied to Christian discourse of demon compulsion. The constellation of competing Christian and Jewish monotheisms, the inherited cultic understanding of idolatry-as-impurity (or, conversely, purity as absence-of-idolatry) and the argument logic(s) of demon compulsion led to the convenient singling out of Solomon as a Jewish proxy in the *ex post facto* "proofs" of a deity's superiority in early Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* apologiae and polemics.

However, in order to apply the argument logic, that same discourse of early Christian *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics also implied a kind of parity between the figure of Solomon and the figure of Jesus. It gave attention and significance to Solomon's apocryphal power over demons that it otherwise would not have had, which, in turn, fulfilled the necessary conditions for what Dorothea Salzer has termed *unio magica* – a type of "magical thinking" in which the ritual act is undertaken not *with* or *through*, but *as* the allusive referent, in this case Solomon. The persistent and consistent Christian descriptions of Solomon's (albeit former) power over demons thus gave the figure of Solomon the allusive potential necessary for the development of "Solomonic" magic, complete with discourse-specific forms of the *rite*, the *formula*, and the *condition of the performer*. Moreover, this development came to anchor the Christian discourse of demon compulsion – the discourse that became anti-magic theology (i.e. demonology) in the Middle Ages – to the original *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics of Christian antiquity thus resulting in a persistent vague or even direct association between "magic" and Jews in Christian anti-magic theology.

Chapter 2 dealt with the theological process by which Thomas Aquinas and his predecessors solved the problem of *selectively* deauthorizing demon compulsion by definitively splitting the inherited account into two distinct discourses: exorcism as *licit* demon compulsion, and "magic" as *illicit* demon compulsion. Additionally, the chapter proposed a significant historical connection between Aquinas' redefinition of the requisite *condition of the performer* to "purity" as presence-of-grace and the Dominican discovery of the Jewish anti-Christian polemical tract, *Toledot Yeshu*, which presented Jesus as a magician.

Where Aquinas' predecessors had failed to distinguish exorcism from magic definitively because of the indemonstrability of the understood requisite "pure" *condition of the performer* within a single discourse of demon compulsion, Aquinas specified the meaning of "exorcism" by defining the requisite "purity" in its ritual as the presence-of-grace, which could only be achieved within the sanctioned operations of the institutional Church – the sacraments, etc. Additionally, and importantly, Aquinas defined a second, distinct, discourse of "magic" by conceding the efficacy of the ritual act, but attributing the efficacy of its rituals to a different requisite *condition of the performer*: impurity-as-idolatry. He grounded this distinct discourse of "magic" and his definition of its *condition of the performer* in the canonical account of Solomon's idolatry in 1 Kings 11 and the apocryphal narrative of Solomon's power over demons.

This move had far-reaching implications. Within the discourse itself, it meant that Solomon retrospectively became the father of a distinct discourse of *nigromantia* (i.e. demonic magic) defined in terms which supported the hierarchical and institutional

structures of Christianity by defining "impurity" as *illicit* authorization for some types of religious power and authority. This no doubt further contributed to the *Contra-Iudaeos* (and later, anti-Semitic) nature of Christian anti-magic theology, as noted by Trachtenberg (1946). Nonetheless, by conceding the efficacy of the *illicit* ritual act, but connecting it causally to a requisite "impure" *condition of the performer* (i.e. impurity-as-idolatry), Aquinas did resolve the *corpus delicti* problem that had vexed his predecessor, William of Auvergne. In Aquinas' two-theory model, the success of any demon compulsion not specifically sanctioned by the Church served as evidence of guilt of the sin of idolatry.

Yet Aquinas' gains were not without a cost. His crucial instrumentalization of the figure of Solomon from both the apocryphal and canonical accounts only added to the allusive potential (*unio magica*) of the figure of Solomon within Christian discourses of demon compulsion, and thus inadvertently supported the discourse of illicit Solomonic magic. Moreover, it resulted in a theory of magic defined almost exclusively in the theological terms of idolatry and demonic intervention. The rhetorical effectiveness of Aquinas' theory of magic no doubt contributed to the proliferation of Scholastic demonology which not only consolidated religious power and authority within the hierarchical structures of the institutional Church, but also brought any and all inquiry or experimentation into the nature of physical causality under the jurisdiction of the Church as a result of Aquinas' attribution of the effects of magic to the intervention of demons.

The connection we proposed there, between the Dominican discovery of the polemical Jewish *Toledot Yeshu* and Aquinas' commodification of grace, is plausible but

inconclusive. It is certainly interesting to note that Aquinas denies the possibility of compelling demons "by sensible means" in his *De Potentia Dei* within two years of the discovery of a tract which portrays the figure of Jesus as working magic by ultimately "sensible means." It is further interesting to note that Aquinas' redefinition of "purity" as presence-of-grace, which "proves" by reason of impossibility – whether Aquinas was aware of the *Toledot Yeshu* or not – that Jesus could not have been a magician, does so by commodifying grace and tacitly denying the efficacious power of the name of God. More research into Aquinas' possible awareness of the *Toledot Yeshu* and evolution of his theology of grace might lead to important discoveries about the relationship of Scholastic sacramental theology, "Solomonic" magic, and the history of *Contra-Iudaeos* polemics.

Finally, outside of Christian discourses of demon compulsion, the findings of chapter 2 demonstrate what appears to be a meaningful exception to Malinowski's observation of the primacy of the *formula* in the tripartite division of magic.[2] Aquinas' tacit denial of the *ipso facto* efficacy of the name of God (i.e. *formula*) as "sensible means" creates a void which he fills with the *condition of the performer* in his theories of both licit and illicit demon compulsion (i.e. magic). This suggests a more broadly applicable pattern of selective institutional authorization for religious and ritual acts in groups which define themselves by knowledge of the *formulae* – as in revealed, axial religion. In other words, when both *rite* (as Malinowski notes) and *formula* are public knowledge, only the *condition of the performer* can emerge as "the most important part."

[2] As we cited in the Introduction to the project, Malinowski writes, "To direct questions on the subject, the natives always reply that the spell is the more important part. The question: 'where is the real strength of magic?' would always receive the reply: 'in the spell.' The condition of the magicians is, like the rite, essential to the performance of the magic, but it is also considered by the natives as subservient to the spell" (404).

Much of Chapter 3 was dedicated to an exposition establishing the continuity of the Solomonic discourse, a longitudinal extension of our argument. Here, however, a number of related points emerge as significant. First, the apparent absence of the figure of Solomon in Renaissance and Reformation discourses of magic (Hermeticism, Christian Cabala, and Protestant anti-magic theology) may have more to do with the vigorous suppression of "Solomonic" magic *per se*, than with waning interest in the paradigmatic model and in Solomon as the allusive referent (*unio magica*). This observation has bearing on broader discussions of the history of the book – authorship, publication, and censorship. It also has bearing on intertextuality in the sixteenth century, serving as a case-in-point that absence of (overt) evidence does not equal evidence of absence.

Second, the same text that conclusively demonstrates the (covert) persistence of the Solomonic paradigm in the Northern Renaissance during the sixteenth century, Reuchlin's *De Verbo Mirifico*, also reveals direct connections between Reuchlin's Christian Cabala and medieval manual of ritual magic, the *Liber Razielis* (more specifically, the *Liber Semamforas*, which circulated as the seventh book of the *Liber Razielis*).

The findings of Chapter 4 dealt largely with the anti-magic theology of Protestant Reformer Martin Luther and the final turn in the spiritualization and metaphoricization of "purity" that we discussed in this study. By identifying Luther's use of presence-of-faith as the *condition of the performer* in his own theory of licit (i.e. religious) demon compulsion, we showed the extent to which Luther was still in dialogue with Aquinas even near the end of his life.

Luther's struggle in his *Vom Schemhamphoras* (1543) to solve what we have called the *corpus delicti* problem in his anti-magic theology without relying on a Scholastic demonology shows just how heavily Christian anti-magic discourse had come to rely on the idea of idolatry to define and forbid the practice of magic. Unfortunately for Luther, it highlights not only the intended but also the unintended consequences of his own doctrine of justification by faith alone. As Luther undermined Aquinas' commodification of grace, he supported his own combat against the sale of indulgences, etc. However, adhering to his doctrine of *sola fide* also left Luther with the same *corpus delicti* problem that theologians had faced before Aquinas. Luther could not rhetorically demonstrate spiritual guilt ("impurity") as sin without conceding the efficacy of "illicit" ritual acts, and he could not concede the efficacy of ritual acts without granting the validity of "works." The theological impasses multiplied from this point forward, as well: Luther's theology not only rendered null the merit of works (*as latria*, the service rendered to God), but also rendered the traditional understanding of the First Commandment meaningless (as a prohibition against *idolatria*, the service rendered to false gods).

Sorting out the problematics raised by Luther's anti-magic theology allowed us to understand his largely neglected and virulently anti-Semitic text, *Vom Schemhamphoras*, in terms not heretofore employed. It is not merely an anti-Semitic rant devoid of any theology (as one scholar suggested), nor is it a polemic against the Jewish Kabbalah. Rather, we have argued it here as the full and final iteration of Luther's anti-magic theology, a text directed at Christians against the practice of "Solomonic" magic

identified by the ineffable and efficacious name of God – the *Shem ha-Mephorash*. Moreover, we suggest, it is Luther's "missing" demonology. Luther's portrayal of the Jews in this text represents a *literal* demonization of Jews – the theological instrumentalization of Jews into a function analogous to that of demons in Scholastic theology: association with demons/Jews = "idolatrous" intent. For Luther, one can no more legitimately invite interaction with a Jew than with a demon. The mere intention to do so served in this late theological work as Luther's last attempt to provide the *corpus delicti* that was missing in his earlier anti-magic prohibition in the *Small Catechism*.

This line of argumentation about Solomonic demon compulsion and the *condition of the performer*, however, has ramifications beyond the immediate discussions we have tracked or alluded to. As we have shown, this study contributes to scholarship concerned with the development of Christianity, medieval studies, Renaissance and Reformation studies, and even – to an extent – to Jewish studies. By tracing the development of "purity" as *condition of the performer* from antiquity forward through the early modern era, we have been able to correlate major theological developments with specific changes in one set of traditional theological logics, using as our evidence the texts' solutions to the requisite *condition of the performer* in one of a number of archetypal "magical" acts within Christian discourse: demon compulsion.

In fact, this study stands virtually alone as an examination of changing Christian hegemonic strategies of selective authorization for efficacious ritual. Nonetheless, this setting of the project is timely and justifiable since, as Richard Kieckhefer has demonstrated, the discourse of ritual magic – particularly in the Middle Ages – belonged

to a "clerical underground." The work of Kieckhefer and others confirms that the authors of ritual texts were aware of and conversant in the theological discourse that strove to forbid their magical activities – a fact that is evident in the magical texts themselves as they visibly engage in dialogue with orthodox theology. For example, such texts of ritual magic – some of which can be sourced back to the twelfth century – reveal a critical concern for orthodox forms of "purity" as *condition of the performer* in their "magical" acts.

The examination of these texts – their incorporation into a study set up like this one is – is the next logical step in research into the changing constructs of "purity" within Christian discourse(s) of demon compulsion. Yet the insight that follows such an investigative procedure would offer is not limited to conclusions about discourses of demon compulsion or even "magic." Scholars would do well to remember that, as theologically literate clerics, the authors of these texts may be relied upon (at least collectively if not individually) to represent period understandings of "purity" in their texts. In their writings – far more than in that of the anti-magic theologians –, the equation of purity with absence-of-defilement, presence-of-grace, and presence-of-faith is made explicit. Representatively, the *Liber Consecratus* (fourteenth century, possibly earlier) prescribes not only ablutions and abstinence but also participation in the sacraments (confession and communion) in preparation for the ritual act(s) described in the text.[3]

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[3] See: Honorius of Thebes and Joseph Peterson, *The Sworn Book of Honorius: Liber Iuratus Honorii* (Berwick: Nicolas-Hays Inc., 2016) 36. Peterson summarizes the preparations: "They include a special diet, shaving the hair from your body, sexual abstinence, confession and contrition, observing physical and spiritual purity, giving alms to three

Such examples offer the scholar a period witness to more popular understandings of sacraments, grace, and spiritual authority and power. Moreover, they also suggest significant possibilities for dating texts whose provenance has been in doubt in the scholarship. For example, the presence of a particular spiritualized form of "purity" in a text can provide a useful *post quem* – a date before which certain theological constructs of "purity" simply did not exist in familiar theological debates.[4] This function is particularly significant in the example of two texts to which we will return below, the *Arbatel* and the *Book of Abramelin*, which seems to reflect the Protestant notions of "purity."

In the case of our present example, the *Liber Consecratus*, the oldest preserved manuscript dates to the fourteenth century, Sloane MS 3854 (fol 117-144), although the text *may* have originated earlier. The optic recommended here would stress that its operant definition of "purity" does not appear to reflect Aquinas' commodification of grace. Combined with other evidence, this discrepancy may be used either to source the text to a particular date or place, or (if that can be established by other means) it could be used to help trace the spread of the influence Aquinas' theology over time on the ground. If the text can be demonstrated to postdate Aquinas, but does not reflect his ideas of grace, it follows that Aquinas formulation of grace was not yet convincing enough to risk incorporating into a ritual act.

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poor persons, and frequent prayer." Peterson does not include attending mass (i.e. receiving communion), but the text does prescribe this.

[4] Since, logically, either the magical text postdates the theological innovation or – far less likely – an anonymous magician would have had to anticipate the theological innovation.

As we previously mentioned, this sort of sourcing by presence or absence of particular constructs of "purity" could also be especially helpful in the investigation of certain early modern texts, even those considered more secular in origin. For example, the anonymous *Arbatel de magia veterum* (1575) and the so-called *Book of Abramelin*, a pseudepigraphic epistolary magical text which dates itself internally to the fifteenth century, provide two excellent examples. The former seems to stipulate a form of purity-as-predestination as part of the requisite *condition of the performer*.[5] Such resonance with Protestant theology cannot be ignored in a sixteenth century text. The latter text makes internal claims to be of fifteenth century Jewish origin, yet the text reflects marked *sola fide* tendencies in addition to more *pro forma* prescriptions of ablutions and abstentions.[6] The theology helps create the possibility of refuting these internal claims (as well as, potentially, forming a hypothesis about the correct placement of the text) by identifying an anachronistic or out-of-place form of "purity" in the ritual preparations has not yet been explored.

This last example points to still broader potential for the findings of the present study. While we have focused here on the clearly definable, continuous, paradigmatically consistent ritual example of demon compulsion, the significance of spiritualized and metaphoricized forms of "purity" within Christian ritual discourses more broadly

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[5] Peterson notes that, "like Paracelsus, *Arbatel* asserts that people are predisposed from birth for certain callings, including magic" (Aphorisms 17, 18, 39, and 42). See Joseph H. Peterson, *Arbatel – Concerning the Magic of the Ancients: Original Sourcebook of Angel Magic* (Lake Worth, FL: Ibis Press, 2009) xvi.

[6] There are many examples in the text that smack of sixteenth century. One particular example recalls Luther's encounters with the Devil" "[The demons] will list for you all your sins. They will particularly try to dispute your belief in God." See: Abraham ben S, Georg Dehn, Steven Guth, and S L. M. G. Mathers, *The Book of Abramelin: A New Translation* (Lakeworth, FL: Ibis Press, 2006) 116.

represents the farthest reaching potential of this study. In those *loci* where we can indeed demonstrate the presence of constructs "purity" as the requisite, authorizing *condition of the performer*, we must also infer the existence of a performer. In the study of Catholic efficacious ritual this may yield interesting details about the evolution of the sacraments (e.g. stories of medieval abbesses being deputized to hear confessions in the absence of a priest). Likewise, it may add to our understanding of the changes over time to the rite of exorcism, which began as a lay charism but has become restricted to specially trained (and authorized!) priests.

Perhaps more significantly, in the case of Protestantism(s), the very existence of a construct of "purity" as requisite authorizing *condition of the performer* not only forces us to infer the existence of the performer, but also the *performance*. Returning briefly to Malinowski's observations, we note again his statement that the *rite* was public knowledge and his suggestion that the *formula* was the most important of the three elements. As we have shown, where the group defines itself by knowledge of the *formula*, the *formula* by itself ceases to authorize. It is no longer the most important element. Thus, with both *formula* and *rite* – whether formally acknowledged or not – publically known, only the *condition of the performer* remains as a means for authorizing at any level within a socio-religious hierarchy from entrance to leadership. Whether the authorizing *condition of the performer* be *in statu salutis*, justified by faith, sanctified by grace, predestined, elect, saved, prosperity, etc., it must be performed if it is to be apprehended by the individual or the group.

If the Protestant *condition of the performer*, then, is "purity" as presence-of-faith[7] and, furthermore, if that "purity" – as we have shown – is understood both to authorize demon compulsion and to justify/sanctify (i.e. insures salvation), then that purity-as-faith must be performed in order to be apprehended both by the individual and the socio-religious group. Moreover, presumably, the more elevated the status within the hierarchy of group, the more (or greater) the performance that authorizes that status – with no external evidence, the state is not verifiable. Thus, the locus of this performance – whether or not it is formally acknowledged as efficacious ritual by the individual or the group – must be examined as such by the scholar. For the scholar, there can be no *sola fide*, if faith must be performed.

The implications of identifying efficacious ritual *through* the *condition of the performer* as a visible sign of religious authorization to act ritually implicate a set of scholarly habits that apply equally to historical and modern examples, as does the absolute necessity of *performance* as the one and only means of demonstrating one's authorization. From this perspective we may reapproach other sixteenth-century Protestant phenomena, such as apocalypticism (i.e. prophecy and the interpretation of signs),[8] and an important performative in the absence of other, theologically prescribed forms. Likewise, as we have already suggested in chapter 4, we may approach modern

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[7] This would also apply to any further spiritualization or metaphoricization of "purity" such as – perhaps – absence-of-doubt, presence-of-election, etc.

[8] See for example: Robin B. Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1988). See also: Ken Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2015).

evangelical "spiritual warfare"[9] as a possibly structurally crucial performative – one that potentially dates back to Luther's infamous battles with the Devil as the one and only means of externally recognizing the state of one's internal disposition of faith as a direct consequence of Luther's redefinition of "purity" to exclude *latria*.

Other extensions of scholarly practice can be posited on the basis of how historical evidence and textual evidence has been handled in the present project. For the moment, however, let us take up a more strictly textual piece of evidence logic before we close this conclusion. Let us return briefly to Aquinas' *De Potentia* as the historical moment of a distinct discourse of "magic." There, as we have seen, Aquinas constructed what amounts to a red herring – a complete theory of magic that served to create a valid but illicit (i.e. institutionally deauthorized) form of ritual action. Luther, as we have shown, was still thinking within this logic and thus could not break entirely with Aquinas. He kept the licit, authorized form and then merely denied efficacy to the illicit form of magic that Aquinas elaborated.

In our explication of this case, we have combined two different strategies of explanation. It is a limitation of scholarly theories of "magic" that they have long addressed themselves to these red herrings (deauthorized forms) alone. As we have endeavored to demonstrate, not only illicit forms, but indeed every efficacious ritual act, *including justification, sanctification, etc*., may legitimately and fruitfully be investigated

[9] For an authoritative account of spiritual warfare in modern Protestantism, see for example: Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990).

as a "magical" (i.e. efficacious) ritual act in the terms with which Malinowski provides us if it must be performed.

It is our hope that both the reading of the tradition of Solomonic major and our strategy for recovering its theological referents have offered a rich interpretive environment for readers in both Renaissance/Reformation studies in general, and Religious Studies in particular. Most particularly, we recommend the heuristic of a discursive space in which events (conversations, debates) offer evidence of what textual reports mean and what was at stake for the authors involved. In using it, we can combine multimodal corpuses and deal with textual and authority traditions that *become* contemporaneous in specific contexts of use and understanding, no matter that they stem from different eras and places. In using it, we can also avoid too-simple models of what it means to protest, revolt, or reform, seeing them as closer to a Foucauldian epistemic rupture (a break in eras that does not happen cleanly, or immediately though all intellectual or cultural life) rather than a dialectic or dispute alone.

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